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GHANA: END OF AN ILLUSION

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BOB FITCH and MARY OPPENHEIMER

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GHANA: END OF AN ILLUSION

by **BOB FITCH**
and **MARY OPPENHEIMER**

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

It is with a sense of profound sorrow that we record the deaths in recent weeks of two close friends, both of whom have given invaluable help and encouragement to MR and MR Press over the years. On June 6 John Rackliffe died in Newtonville, Massachusetts, at the age of 54. He edited many MR Press books, including most recently *Monopoly Capital* by Baran and Sweezy and *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America* by Gunder Frank which has still to be published. He was not only a superb editor but also a man of extraordinarily wide interests and talents. Born in Canada, Jack was brought up and educated in the United States. In recent years, however, he found the atmosphere in this country increasingly distasteful and in the early 1960's resumed his Canadian citizenship, making his home in Toronto. At the time of his death he was working on an essay entitled "Yankee, Go Home!" which will be published in MR. Jack had some sort of psychological block about writing for publication, and only a few essays of his are in print (including "Notes for a Character Study" in the Matthiessen memorial issue of MR, October 1950). But he was a prolific and it is not too much to say genial writer of letters in which he dealt engagingly, humorously, seriously with the most varied aspects of life and art. It is our hope that one day we will be able to bring out a volume selected from hundreds of his letters in our possession.

(continued on inside back cover)

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End of an Illusion

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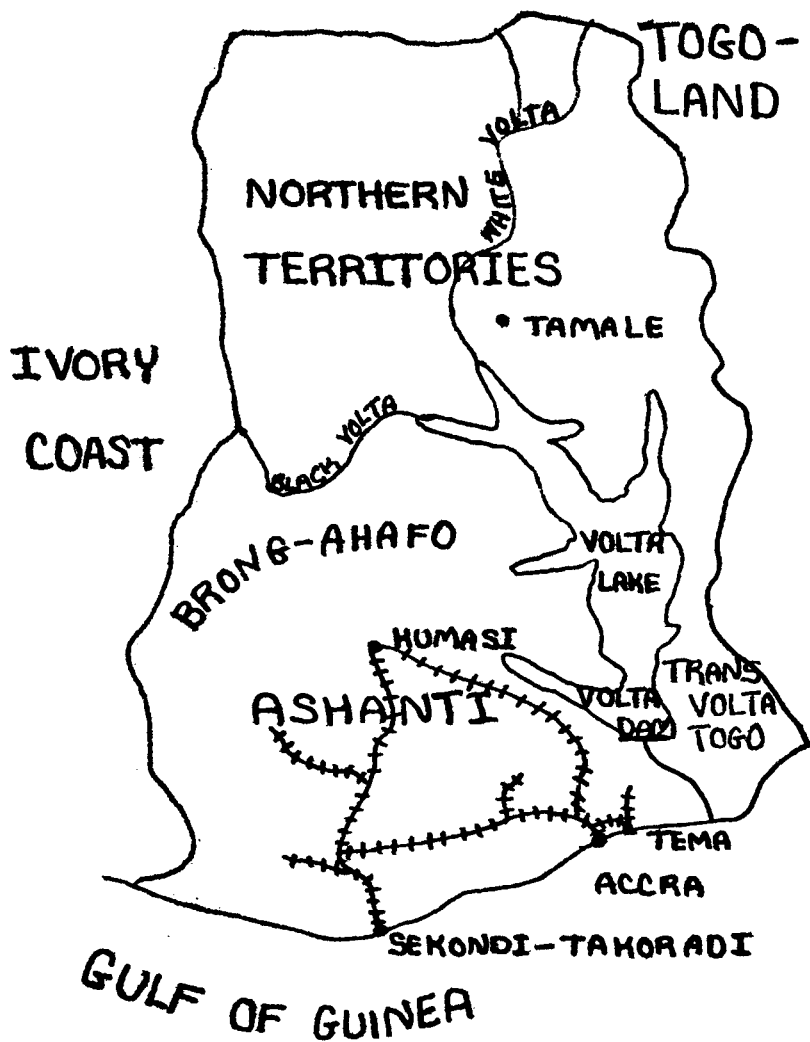
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UPPER VOLTA



GHANA

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FOREWORD

Like many others on the Left, both here and abroad, we were shocked by the February coup which overthrew the Nkrumah government in Ghana. We had never been taken in by the myth of Ghanaian socialism—propagated by both friends and foes of the regime—but we knew that Ghana was the first black African colony to win its independence, that Kwame Nkrumah had an outstanding record as an opponent of colonialism and as a champion of African unity, that the Convention People's Party which he headed was a mass party, and that in some fields, such as education and health, notable progress had been made in the nearly ten years of independence. Against this background it seemed hard to believe that Nkrumah could be overthrown in an almost bloodless coup which, according to all press reports, was greeted with popular approval rather than resistance. How could one explain such an apparent anomaly?

One thing was immediately obvious: none of the “explanations” offered by the supposed experts really explained anything. One of the most popular, for example, put all the blame on the CIA. But if the CIA played a role (and we are prepared to believe that it did), it evidently acted through the army and the police. And this leaves us where we started, without any clue to the ease with which the coup succeeded and the apparent total absence of popular resistance then and later. Only one conclusion seemed possible: that the situation in Ghana was quite different from the appearance which we, along with many others, had all too uncritically accepted as reflecting the reality. Obviously the international revolutionary movement had a crying need—and responsibility—to reconsider the whole problem of Ghana, to make a serious historical and critical analysis of Ghanaian society, and to draw the necessary conclusions and lessons for the future.

On the morrow of the coup, and with these thoughts in mind, we received a manuscript which had been mailed in Berkeley, California, several days before the day the coup took place. An accompanying letter signed by the author, Bob Fitch, explained that he was a graduate student in African studies at the University of California and that the manuscript consisted of three chapters from a thesis in progress on the economic, social, and political development of Ghana during the decade preceding independence in 1957. Was there any possibility, he inquired, that Monthly Review Press might be interested in publishing a book on this subject?

The reader will understand both our surprise and increasing excitement as we read the manuscript and discovered that Mr. Fitch was engaged in carrying out precisely the kind of study of Ghana which the coup now made so necessary and important, and that he was doing so from the standpoint of historical materialism and with great insight and skill. We got in touch with him immediately and asked if he could drop everything else and concentrate on bringing the story up to date and compressing it into the compass of MONTHLY REVIEW's double summer issue. He accepted the challenge, enlisted the collaboration of Mary Oppenheimer, a fellow graduate student in political science at Berkeley, and together they produced the work which it is now our privilege to publish both as the July-August issue of the magazine and as a book which we hope and believe will reach a much wider readership both in the United States and abroad.

Leo Huberman
Paul M. Sweezy

New York
June 15, 1966

So let us look at history as history—men placed in actual contexts which they have not chosen, and confronted by indivertible forces, with an overwhelming immediacy of relations and duties and with only a scanty opportunity for inserting their own agency—and not as a text for hectoring might-have-beens.

—E. P. Thompson

1

THE COUP

For if you think that you can manage a country without letting the people interfere, if you think that the people upset the game by their mere presence, whether they slow it down or whether by their natural ignorance they sabotage it, then you must have no hesitation: you must keep the people out.

—Frantz Fanon¹

Within twenty-four hours the coup was over. It began at 5:00 A.M. when 20 tanks, under joint military and police command, surrounded Flagstaff House, the triple-walled residence of Dr. Nkrumah. By 10:00 A.M., members of Dr. Nkrumah's Soviet-led security guard were beginning to surrender. By 6:00 P.M., Radio Ghana was able to broadcast:

After Ghana's accession to independence, a new class was formed whose principal occupation consisted in emptying the Treasury and perpetrating crimes of all kinds under the pretext of creating a socialist state. Today Kwame Nkrumah and this new class have ceased to exist.

"Detention buses" began to work their way through the streets of Accra to Victoriaborg and the Cantonments, the former "colonial" sections of the city. Here they picked up the Ministers of State and other high party officials. In the center of the city, the buses were slowed by traffic. Crowds pressed in from all sides to identify the occupants. Howls of derision greeted the sight of Nathaniel A. Welbeck, the Minister of State for Party Propaganda. The jails, newly emptied of old political prisoners, began to fill up with new ones.

A crane was dispatched to the square outside Parliament House, where the famous statue of Dr. Nkrumah stood. The crane battered the statue to the ground, where it lay on its back

1. All epigraphs by Fanon are from *The Wretched of the Earth*, New York, 1964.

like a giant sarcophagus. Some ragged, barefoot children were allowed to scamper on top of it briefly for photographers; then it was smashed to bits and the pieces distributed as souvenirs to the crowd.

In Accra and Kumasi, three days of demonstrations followed the coup. Thousands of students and market women ("mammies") joined in street marches in support of the new rulers—the policemen and military officers who now formed the "National Liberation Council." In houses, offices, and factories, Dr. Nkrumah's picture was enthusiastically ripped from the walls. Almost immediately, without waiting for more complete information, Ghana's embassies from Peking to Paris began to wire their support. Defections began to occur even within the 74-man delegation accompanying Dr. Nkrumah on his "peace mission" to Peking. The outstanding international figure of the regime, Alex Quaison-Sackey, was sent by Dr. Nkrumah from Peking to Addis Ababa to protest the seating of the new Ghanaian government's delegation at the Organization of African Unity meeting. Quaison-Sackey flew instead to Accra where he pledged his loyalty to the police/military government. On his arrival he announced: "The Army has taken power to liberate the people from oppression. The Ghanaian people will now have a free country and will not idolize a single man."

Loyalties shifted just as abruptly—if not actually in mid-air—within the circle of government-appointed trade union leaders. The Secretariat of the Trade Union Congress (which had resisted wage demands for the last three years while food prices increased as much as 400 percent) quickly swung into line behind the police and the generals. "In the name of the workers," the Secretariat greeted "with greatest satisfaction, the deliverance of the country and the end of dictatorship and economic chaos."²

The Convention People's Party (CPP), with its two million members and 500,000 militants, all pledged by oath to support Dr. Nkrumah, organized no resistance at all. The CPP had been founded in 1949 when Dr. Nkrumah, together with communists and militant nationalists, decided that only a mass-based party could carry out the struggle against British colonial-

2. *Jeune Afrique*, March 13, 1966.

ism. In 1950, it helped launch the first general strike in sub-Saharan Africa. The strike forced the concessions which brought Dr. Nkrumah from Fort James prison to the position of "Leader of Government Business" in the first popularly elected parliament in colonial Africa.³ Now, after 15 years as Ghana's ruling party, the CPP allowed itself to be dissolved by a simple decree announced over the radio. The day after the coup, the generals wound up the affairs of the CPP by simply announcing over Radio Ghana: "All persons who find themselves in possession of vehicles belonging to the ex-party, the CPP, are requested to return them to the nearest police station."⁴

The scope of the collapse became even more obvious when General Joseph Arthur Ankrah, the junta head, announced that Dr. Nkrumah's personal security force, purged of its Soviet cadre, would be reintegrated without reprisals into the Ghanaian armed forces. Like the Deacon's wonderful one-horse shay, the Nkrumah regime had gone to pieces, "all at once and nothing first/Just as bubbles do when they burst."

But the totality of Dr. Nkrumah's collapse after 15 years of leadership, the speed of the coup, its relative bloodlessness, and the paucity of Nkrumah "loyalists" or diehards, surprised very few Ghanaians. Instead, it seemed more like a case of *déjà vu*. Rumors of an impending coup had been circulating in the capital for months. And it had been said that if Dr. Nkrumah again left the country on the eve of another unpopular budget message, he would never return again.

The Anglo-African Junta

Who were the generals and why did they strike? On the weekend of the coup, one Africanist wrote that "the first question many observers of the Ghanaian scene asked when they heard of the overthrow of Dr. Nkrumah was: How many

3. The progression from prison to parliament is a routine part of British colonial "devolution." After the successful experiences with De Valera, Gandhi, and Nehru, one can imagine that the handling of Nkrumah, Kenyatta, and Jagan was carried out according to some chapter on "Militant Nationalists—Countermeasures," in a *Manual of Standard Operating Procedure for Colonial Officials*.

4. *Jeune Afrique*, March 13, 1966.

Ashantis are at the head of the coup?"⁵ It is clear now that no form of "tribalism"—Ashanti or otherwise—motivated the generals. They have not legalized any of the so-called "tribal" parties which formed the CPP's only serious opposition from 1954 to 1958. "Tribal" politicians like Professor K. A. Busia of Cambridge are still in exile.⁶

The generals and their police auxiliaries have an entirely different frame of reference. General Ankrah, for instance, is a Ga; but insofar as he shows any ethnic particularity, it is Anglo-Saxon. Anglophilia permeates the Ghanaian officer corps. This is partially explained by their service experience: most Ghanaian officers were either trained in Great Britain or trained in Ghana by British cadres. (Except for the personal security forces trained in the Soviet Union, the rest of Ghana's military training assistance has come from the United States and Canada.) After returning from Great Britain, the Ghanaian officers are isolated from Ghanaian society by the demands of military life. As a result, they reflect, in exaggerated form, the general tendency of African bureaucratic elites to imitate their European counterparts.⁷

After their training, Ghanaian officers tend to judge their daily African experience by the norms of British society and the values of the British officer corps. Colonel A. A. Afrifa, an important coup leader, reflects this cultural outlook, in an interview in the London *Observer* (March 13). Explaining why he and his fellow officers disliked the old regime, Afrifa said, "We've lived in Britain before, and therefore didn't like this dictatorship. There was no freedom of the press or of the in-

5. Ashanti, the populous central forest region of Ghana, has played a notable role in the country's history. It is inhabited by tribes sharing the Akan religion and language. These tribes, united in the militarily powerful Ashanti Confederacy, successfully resisted the imposition of British colonial rule throughout the nineteenth century.

6. Western observers of Ghanaian politics have greatly overemphasized the "tribal" factor. Over 85 percent of the Ghanaian people are involved in the money economy—the highest percentage in Africa. Yet professional Africanists tend to conjure up pictures of political battles decided by painted warriors with spears. Actually ethnic politics in New York City provide a better model.

7. Three British Commonwealth nations now have leaders who were trained as soldiers in Great Britain: President Ayub Khan of Pakistan, General Aguiyi-Ironsi of Nigeria (who once served as Extra-Equerry to the Queen), and General Ankrah.

dividual—things we know are fundamental human rights.” Afrifa went on: “Nkrumah introduced party politics into the Army. He took a man with no training as an officer, a Mr. Hassan, appointed him a brigadier, and put him in charge of military intelligence. Hence we had a situation in which mess corporals were watching commanding officers and reporting them. What greater insult to our intelligence and patriotism.”

The first indication of how dangerous this mixture of military “professionalism” and Anglophilia was to prove for the Nkrumah government had occurred during the 1961 UN Congo intervention. Ghana’s UN contingent was commanded by the British Major-General H. T. Alexander. Ankrah, then a colonel, was second in command. Both opposed Dr. Nkrumah’s policy toward the Lumumba forces. Dr. Nkrumah followed an essentially moderate course, between the nations of the Casablanca group who withdrew their troops from the UN command, and the members of the Monrovia group which generally supported the UN presence in the Congo. Dr. Nkrumah kept his troops under UN command (“to his great credit,” according to General Alexander) but still sent weapons secretly to the Lumumbaists. Even this middle course was criticized by Alexander and the Ghanaian officer corps. They opposed all aid to the Lumumbaists on the grounds that it undermined the UN mission and interfered with their “soldierly duty.”⁸ Alexander asserted that the main objectives for the UN forces were to “stabilize” the Congo situation by bringing in as many non-African troops as possible, while at the same time preventing arms from reaching the Lumumbaists.⁹

In September 1961, after months of conflict with the generals, Dr. Nkrumah decided to send cadets to the Soviet Union for military training. Alexander naturally objected. He observed that the Ghanaian officer corps would be split into two camps if the plan were carried out. Complete ideological

8. Fikri Melika, “Ankrah: l’homme qui a su attendre,” *Jeune Afrique*, March 13, 1966.

9. Alexander complained that the African contingents were too friendly to the Congolese people: the climax of African “unreliability” came when the Ghanaian 3rd Brigade mutinied and sent its officers fleeing into the bushes, *African Tighrope*, London, 1965.

uniformity would be threatened. As he explained: "Whether the young men come back to Ghana as budding communists or not is not the point. They will certainly not come back like-minded to the present officer corps."¹⁰

Alexander's opposition became so strong that on September 22, 1961, Dr. Nkrumah dismissed him and the other British cadres assigned to the Ghanaian Army. The extent to which the Ghanaian officers supported Alexander against Dr. Nkrumah is now clear. For with the success of the coup, the "National Liberation Council" publicly revealed that they had been plotting Dr. Nkrumah's overthrow since 1961.¹¹

The Anglo-Africans Take Charge

The strength of the police force and the power of the army are proportionate to the stagnation in which the rest of the nation is sunk.

—Frantz Fanon

The junta has been in power long enough to demonstrate that it understands completely the theory and practice of neo-colonialist economics. It accepts without question the double standard by which the Western countries guide themselves according to Keynes, while the underdeveloped countries are supposed to follow the wisdom of Malthus. "Cheap government," the policy of the nineteenth-century European bourgeoisie, has become the order of the day in an African country without a bourgeoisie. Thus Lieutenant General Ankrah (he promoted himself the day after the coup) has announced the abandonment of the Seven Year Plan; all "prestige" projects (e.g. factories) are being halted; the operation of the Ghana Airways will be restricted;¹² diplomatic representation is being

10. *Ibid.*, p. 92.

11. The generals are still inveighing against the 1961 act which sent the Ghanaian cadets to the Soviet Union. See Press Release No. 4, Ghana Information Service, March 1, 1966.

12. What bothered the British about the Ghana Airways was not its deficit, but the competition it gave over African routes to BOAC; in addition, Dr. Nkrumah antagonized the British aircraft industry when he bought United States and Soviet aircraft. See *Wall Street Journal*, March 10, 1966.

curtailed; and all salaries and wages will be reviewed with a view towards reducing expenditures. Ankrah, who became a director of Ghana's National Investment Bank in August 1965, has decided that the private sector of the economy will predominate: measures will be taken to "review" the scope of state corporations; private enterprise will no longer be forced to accept government participation; and the establishment of joint private/government enterprises will be on a voluntary basis.

The Anglo-Africans not only strive to coordinate theory and practice in neo-colonialist economics; they also show themselves careful students of the "wisdom of the West" in the administrative sphere. For them British colonial rule laid the foundation for Ghana's golden age: "A mere eighteen years ago," an official statement reminisces, "the United Kingdom which had ruled this country for over a century, began to release the strings of government to the people of Ghana. The country was then blessed, on the final attainment of political independence, with adequate funds in all our Departments which could successfully continue the intricate work of Government after the departure of the British."¹³ Since then, the statement continues, Ghanaian self-rule has brought nothing but Debt, Dictatorship, and Declining cocoa prices.

In foreign affairs, the generals have been quick to follow the "opening to the Right" offered by the *Times* of London which suggested in a leading article the day after the coup that "if they [the generals] generate confidence, and want help, Ghana would be worth salvaging again."¹⁴ Since then, the junta has resumed diplomatic relations with Great Britain, requested foreign aid, and affirmed its belief in the worldwide mission of the British Commonwealth which has "a vital role in the promotion and maintenance of world peace and security."¹⁵ The only false step taken by the junta thus far was to exceed the bounds of Anglo-American anti-communism. The decision of March 2nd to expel 130 Soviet technicians was opposed by Western diplomats in Accra.¹⁶ Except for this mis-

13. Ghana Press Release No. 4.

14. February 25, 1966.

15. Ghana Press Release No. 4.

16. *New York Times*, March 3, 1966.

step, the Western diplomats "could hardly contain their delight with the turn of events."¹⁷

The African Response

While the Ghanaian junta devoted itself to hammering Ghana into marketable salvage, and while Western diplomats rejoiced, the militant Left in Africa could hardly believe what was happening. Ousmane Ba, Mali Foreign Minister, spoke for many when he said, "President Nkrumah's revolutionary work cannot be replaced, and we do not accept that some musical comedy general, helped by policemen, should question the Ghanaian people's twenty years of struggle."¹⁸ In Senegal, Egypt, Tanzania, and Mali, popular meetings were held to protest the coup. Even in Liberia and Ethiopia, official statements deplored the turn of events.

The most striking demonstration of support for Dr. Nkrumah came from Guinea. Strong ties had developed between the two countries in 1958, when Guinea cast her famous "No" vote against joining the French "Community." After their defeat by 1,136,000 votes to 57,500, the French pulled out of Guinea immediately, taking with them everything they could, and smashing everything they couldn't. Phones were ripped from the walls, administrative records burned, hospital supplies destroyed. Ghana quickly carried out what was probably the first concrete act of Pan-African solidarity. She lent Guinea £10,000,000 without interest or repayment schedule.¹⁹ It was against this background and that of the late Ghana-Guinea-Mali union that President Sekou Touré conferred the Honorary Presidency of Guinea on Dr. Nkrumah. The gesture reflected the judgment that the Nkrumah regime was different from the five other African governments that had been overthrown since November 1965. It aimed at institutionalizing what should be clear: that Kwame Nkrumah was not a vulgar imperialist stooge like Upper Volta's Maurice Yameogo or Nigeria's Rt. Hon. Sir

17. *Ibid.*

18. *The Times* (London), March 8, 1966.

19. One Ghana pound = one pound sterling. Throughout this work the symbol £ is used for both currencies.

Abubakar Tafawa Balewa (O.B.E., K.B.E., C.B.E., P.C.), whose regimes had also been swept away without popular resistance.

What is the significance of the Ghanaian coup's failure to provoke any popular resistance? Did the fall of Nkrumah's fortified residence mark the end of the first socialist state in Africa? If socialism failed in Ghana, the richest of the sub-Saharan African states, what are the prospects for the rest of the continent? What forced the government into its obvious isolation? Does the Ghanaian experience have any wider implications for revolutionary movements elsewhere? Are the overturns in Ghana and Indonesia somehow related? Is the Ghanaian coup part of a world-wide counter-revolutionary trend?

The Ghanaian coup has given rise to these questions and many others which cry out for answers. So far, the analyses of the coup—both liberal and radical—have focused almost entirely on its obvious and superficial aspects. And the major emphasis has been on Nkrumah's personality. Liberals generally describe him as a romantic African Marxist whose megalomania grew as his charisma dwindled. They assert that he sank the whole economy under the weight of scores of grandiose but impractical schemes for industrial development. Radicals, on the other hand, portray him as the leader of the African revolutionary movement, a man who was close to his goal of creating a socialist state in Africa. But just as he was about to succeed, he was overthrown by an unholy alliance forged within a cabal of reactionary generals and "foreign plotters."

If the Ghanaian coup were an isolated phenomenon and had not followed a whole series of overturns in the under-developed world (Algeria, Nigeria, Indonesia, Brazil, Congo-(L), to name only a few), the two foregoing explanations might seem more plausible. But the pervasiveness of these coups, crossing continents without regard for world reputations or professed ideologies, demands a more sophisticated analysis.

The truth is that powerful social forces are systematically destroying the regimes established by the non-communist anti-colonial movements in Asia and Africa after the Second World War. If these forces are to be controlled or exploited, an analysis must be developed which places individual politicians, as well

as "foreign plotters," in their proper socio-historical context. After the counter-revolution of 1849, Engels wrote:

That the sudden movements of February and March 1849 were not the work of single individuals, but spontaneous, irresistible manifestations of national wants and necessities, more or less clearly understood, but very distinctly felt by numerous classes in every country, is a fact recognized everywhere; but when you inquire into the causes of the counter-revolutionary successes, there you are met on every hand with the ready reply that it was Mr. This or Citizen That who "betrayed" the people. Which reply may be very true or not, according to the circumstances, but under no circumstances does it explain anything—not even how it came to pass that the "people" allowed themselves to be thus betrayed. And what poor chance stands a political party whose entire stock-in-trade consists in a knowledge of the solitary fact that Citizen So-and-So is not to be trusted.²⁰

No less than after the 1849 counter-revolution, a *political* analysis of the Ghanaian coup is now required. And this analysis must avoid both liberal psychoanalysis and "radical" hagiography. What is required is class analysis and historical analysis. Therefore, to understand how the Nkrumah state was destroyed, it is necessary to have some idea of how it was built. The character of the national states created in the underdeveloped world after the Second World War was shaped most decisively by the character of their national independence struggles. So it is to this period of Ghanaian history that we must now turn.

20. *Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, New York, 1933, p. 10.

2

THE GHANAIAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT

We think there is something wrong with the simple interpretation of the national liberation movement as a revolutionary trend.

—*Amílcar Cabral, Secretary-General,
Partido Africano da Independência
da Guiné é Cabo Verde*

Why did the British grant independence to Ghana in 1957? The Convention People's Party (CPP) Central Committee and the British Colonial Office answered this question quite differently. Convention People's Party spokesmen described how the nationalist movement, headed by Dr. Nkrumah, organized by K. A. Gbedemah, and assisted by Kofi Baako and Kojo Botsio, awoke the spirit of liberty in the towns, shook the villages into political awareness, and thus exerted continual pressure on the British authorities. Finally, with the entire nation massed behind the CPP, the British had no choice but to grant their demands for self-government.

The British, of course, tell another story. They deny that they were forced to leave at all. The British government, they say, has always been willing to grant independence to colonial peoples who are capable of managing their own affairs. Ghana was only another example of the British government's flexibility and desire to maximize "liberty" through an orderly process of constitutional devolution.

The British Colonial Office likes to claim that it constituted, if not the vanguard, at least the strong right wing of the Ghanaian independence movement. And if "independence" is defined in the very narrowest sense, the Colonial Office can hardly be denied its claim. Ghana, after all, has never experienced a Dienbienphu; nor did Accra fall to Nkrumah and his followers as Havana did to Castro's bearded *guerrilleros*. Ghana advanced to independence by carefully planned stages marked by periodic constitutional revisions which gradually placed more and more

legislative responsibility in the hands of Nkrumah's party.

On Independence Day, March 4, 1957, the source of the new government's legitimacy could hardly have been made more clear. The Duchess of Kent, acting as Queen Elizabeth's official representative, announced at the ceremonies: "Henceforward all powers previously exercised by my government in the United Kingdom will be exercised by my ministers in Ghana." The presence of the Colonial Governor, dressed like the commander of an eighteenth century frigate; the display of all the mildewed symbols of British imperial authority; and the playing of "God Save the Queen" emphasized the tidiness of the transition.

The Duchess of Kent had spoken of "the powers previously exercised by my government." Were any of these powers so broad that they endangered Britain's vital economic interests in Ghana? Had the substance of power actually shifted from London to Accra?

Surely twenty years of bloody struggles on three continents—in Malaya, Kenya, Aden, and British Guiana—suggest the contrary. The colonial governments yield administrative powers to the "natives" only when vital British interests are reasonably secure. These natives must show themselves willing and able to serve as post-colonial sergeants of the guard over British property: rubber in Malaya, land in Kenya, oil in Aden, bauxite in British Guiana. When no cooperative stratum has yet emerged, "independence" is delayed. Meanwhile, elements hostile to British interests are liquidated, shoved aside, or co-opted.

The problem for the British in colonial Africa has been to shape a native ruling class strong enough to protect British interests, but still weak enough to be dominated. Sir Andrew Cohen, former head of the African Division of the Colonial Office, explains the process:

In the early stages, pressure of local opinion tends to be weak and unorganized and, if the official attitude is rigid, or negative, progress may be slow or non-existent. In such cases action by the government is often needed to induce movement forward by doing something which primes the political pump. Governors call this "Keeping one step ahead of public opinion." In the later stages of political advance, pressure by nationalist forces tends to be strong and here, if the government is rigid, there may be an ex-

plosion, or if the government is weak, progress may be too rapid in the wrong direction. In fact, where local political forces or movements are powerful, smooth progress depends on imagination as well as firmness on the part of governments, not only on strength but on flexibility.¹

Thus the colonial governor serves as the midwife of the national independence movement—a midwife who always stands ready to strangle the baby in order to rescue and nourish the afterbirth. It is this afterbirth of the national independence movement which the colonial governor then treats as the soul of the independent state.

According to Amilcar Cabral, leader of the revolutionary movement in “Portuguese” Guinea, the national independence movements “induced” by the colonial regimes have as their objectives: (1) Preventing the enlargement of the socialist bloc; (2) Liberating the reactionary forces in Africa which were being stifled by colonialism; (3) Enabling these forces to ally themselves with the international bourgeoisie.²

In Ghana, the “liberation” of local reactionary forces had been dragging on for decades. British policy from the Guggisberg administration (1919-1927) through that of the hopelessly inept Sir Gerald Creasy (1948-1949) aimed at establishing some kind of coalition of “indirect rule” chiefs and Anglophile lawyers as a native ruling class. Within the Colonial Office, the liberals wanted to weight the coalition more heavily with lawyers, while the conservatives argued for the chiefs. Until 1947, Gold Coast “politics” consisted primarily of lobbying by various cliques of chiefs and lawyers for greater representation within the Gold Coast Legislative Council. And while the chiefs and lawyers tried to out-connive each other within the “sandbox” Legislative Council, the country continued to be run from the Governor’s residence.

The possibility that the African masses would ever have anything to say about who would rule the Gold Coast never occurred to either the British, the chiefs, or the lawyers. As

1. Andrew Cohen, *British Policy in Changing Africa*, London, 1959, p. 37.

2. Amilcar Cabral, “The Struggle in Guinea,” *International Socialist Journal*, August 1964, p. 441.

Cohen admits, even after the Second World War, British colonialists "based their attitudes and actions on the assumption that there was indefinite time ahead."³ It seems fantastic, but the British actually believed that indirect rule could continue while railroads, mining, and construction industries developed; while an organized working class appeared; while the entire economy shifted its emphasis from subsistence to commodity production; and after 30,000 Africans had been sent off with modern weapons to fight the Japanese in Burma. After all these transformations, the Colonial Office thought it would still be able to rule through its favorite chiefs; continue to send District Officers into the "bush"; and generally carry on as in the days of Lugard. The February 1948 upheavals changed all that.

Even a few weeks before the riots, the colonial officials showed no sensitivity to the socio-economic changes that had taken place. "I shall give my fullest support to the chiefs and their councils," Sir Gerald Creasy announced on January 12th, 1948, on being sworn in as Governor. "The chiefs and their councils will become increasingly important."⁴ And Lord Trefgarne, the newly appointed head of the Colonial Development Corporation described his view of the future a week later: "As I see it, it is a real beginning to the Colonial Century, the start of a new era of Colonial progress."⁵

By the first of March, however, the bright new colonial dawn could hardly be seen through the flames rising from the commercial district of Accra. The United Africa Company and the Union Trading Company stores had been sacked and burned; Africans were assaulting British and Syrian businessmen on the streets; 29 Africans were dead and 237 wounded. Anticolonial feeling spread from Accra to Kumasi and sparked strikes which closed down public utilities and transportation. By March 8, Nigerian reinforcements were in the country, additional British troops were convoyed from South Africa, and three troop carriers were sent to Gibraltar for possible deployment to the Gold Coast.

3. Cohen, *British Policy in Changing Africa*, p. 29.

4. *Ashanti Pioneer* (Kumasi), January 12, 1948.

5. *Ashanti Pioneer*, January 19, 1948.

The immediate cause of the uprising was the action of a British police officer who opened fire on an ex-servicemen's demonstration. But the incident was no mere spasm of hate quickly aroused and quickly abated. The violence reflected a general *prise de conscience* by the African masses. Transportation strikes, mining strikes, and a nation-wide boycott that even the indirect-rule chiefs were compelled to support had formed the immediate political background of the "Christianborg riots." Since the Second World War the working class had grown tremendously, and trade unions were being organized in every town. In the port cities of Sekondi-Takoradi, they were organized and led by Marxists like ex-locomotive driver Pobee Biney, Turkson Ocran, and Anthony Woode. And in addition to the trade union movement, a tremendous variety of organizations was springing up which contributed to the nationalist ferment: youth organizations, study groups, and veterans' organizations all played a role in the movement.

Nevertheless, despite the increasing militance and politicization of the African masses, the Christianborg riots were not "organized." None of the official nationalist organizations played a part—not even the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), the organization of wealthy lawyers and traders of which Kwame Nkrumah had become general secretary in 1947. At the time of the riots in Accra, Nkrumah was in Saltpond, sixty miles away, giving a speech on "The Ideological Battles of our Time." He acknowledges that he had no influence over the African participants in the struggle, but says that he was "certainly aware of their general dissatisfaction" and that "it had been my intention to organize them in due course as an arm of our movement."⁶ This admission by Dr. Nkrumah deserves emphasis, for it is generally assumed that nationalist agitation in the Gold Coast somehow began with his arrival in December 1947. It is true that the form the nationalist movement took was decisively influenced by Nkrumah, but the existence of intense anti-British feeling and the determination of the African masses to engage in violent resistance to colonialism in no way depended on him.

6. Kwame Nkrumah, *Ghana*, New York, 1957, p. 77.

While neither Nkrumah nor the other members of the UGCC, which at this time numbered some 1,800 members, led or tried to organize the violent struggles of February 28th, they nevertheless tried to gain some political advantage from them. Both Dr. J. B. Danquah, President of the UGCC, and Nkrumah sent telegrams to the Secretary of State for Colonies on the 29th. Danquah's lengthy telegram read in part:

Unless Colonial Government is changed and a new Government of the people and their chiefs installed at the centre immediately, the conduct of masses now completely out of control with strikes threatened in Police quarters, and rank and file Police indifferent to orders of officers, will continue and result in worse violent and irresponsible acts by uncontrolled people. Working Committee United Gold Coast Convention declare they are prepared and ready to take over interim government. . . . We speak in name of inherent residual sovereignty in chiefs and people in free partnership with British Commonwealth for our country to be saved from inept Government indifferent to sufferings of the governed. The souls of Gold Coast people slaughtered in cold blood upon Castle Road crying out loud for vindication in cause of freedom and liberty. Firing by Police and military going on this morning. Let King and Parliament act without delay in this direst hour of Gold Coast people and their chiefs. God save the King and Floreat United Gold Coast.⁷

Nkrumah's telegram, unlike Danquah's, did not suggest that the UGCC should take over the country. He asked only that a British Commission be sent to supervise elections for a "Constituent Assembly." The inflammatory part of his telegram was not the text but the people to whom he sent it. Seeking the widest possible circulation for news of the uprising, Nkrumah included not only the *New York Times* and the UN Secretary General, but also Willy Gallacher, the Communist MP from Glasgow, the London *Daily Worker*, and Moscow's *New Times*.

This, of course, constituted direct contact with "international Communism" and gave the bewildered and isolated Gold Coast government a chance to stage a show trial and provide

7. Colonial Office, *Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast* (Watson Report), HMSO, London, p. 95. "Floreat United Gold Coast" is an adaptation of the Eton motto of "floreat Etona"—may Eton flourish.

a badly needed scapegoat. Nkrumah, together with five other members of the UGCC, including Danquah, was duly arrested and detained. Sir Gerald Creasy appointed a Commission to investigate the "disturbances." The Commission discovered that Nkrumah was using some of the "legitimate economic grievances" of the Gold Coast people to stage a revolution which would establish a "Union of West African Soviet Socialist Republics." The Committee's Report, written in classic British colonialist style (filled with Dogberryisms, cold war effluvia, and unctuous paternalism masquerading as humanitarianism), included the following "analysis":

Mr. Nkrumah boldly proposes a programme which is all too familiar to those who have studied the techniques of countries which have fallen the victims of Communist enslavement. We cannot accept the naive statements of the members of the Working Committee [of the UGCC] that although this [programme] had been circulated, they did not read it. We are willing to believe they did. On the other hand we feel that the Working Committee, fired by Mr. Nkrumah's enthusiasm and drive, were eager to seize power and for the time being were indifferent to means adopted to attain it.⁸

The principle effect of the Government's efforts, as might have been expected, was to make the UGCC the leading nationalist organization, and turn Kwame Nkrumah "overnight" into the Gold Coast's outstanding nationalist hero.⁹

When Kwame Nkrumah arrived in the Gold Coast in December of 1947, he was 39 years old and had been out of the country for twelve years. In breadth and variety of experience, the decade Nkrumah spent as a young man in the United States recalls similar periods in the lives of Ho Chi Minh and Sun Yat-sen. Arriving in 1935, during the depression, Nkrumah studied at the University of Pennsylvania and Lincoln University, where he earned degrees in education, sociology, and theology. Nevertheless he was often forced to earn a precarious living at various odd jobs which included selling fish and working in a soap factory. He still found time to observe and take

8. *Ibid.*

9. Between March and May 1948, UGCC membership increased approximately twenty-five times.

part in political activity of every imaginable kind—from Republican to Trotskyist.

The two experiences that were probably most useful for his future career as a nationalist leader were the sermons he preached as a Baptist minister in Philadelphia and the Pan-African agitation he organized as a student at the University of Pennsylvania. From his regular sermonizing he developed the oratorical power that eventually helped carry him to the leadership of the Gold Coast independence movement. While organizing the African Students' Association, he met Ako Adjei, who later invited him to become the Secretary General of the UGCC.

In 1945 Nkrumah, now thirty-seven, left the United States for Great Britain to study logical positivism with A. J. Ayer in London, and to participate in the organization of the Sixth Pan-African Congress. But it was the problems of imperialism and political ideology rather than those of verification and meaning to which he began to devote his full attention. The Pan-African Congress, the men he met at it, the ideas generated there, the organizational commitments he made as a result, were critically important in his later life and in the history of the African independence movement. Before 1945, Pan-Africanism was just one of the eclectic and contradictory preoccupations in which he was actively involved. After 1945, his political focus narrowed greatly. His associates at the Congress were George Padmore, Peter Abrahams, C. L. R. James, and Jomo Kenyatta: men with radical and communist backgrounds, but whose politics were now influenced at least as much by anti-communism as by Pan-Africanism.

The principle resolutions of the Congress, some of them drafted by Nkrumah, reflected a combination of anti-imperialism and anti-communism which resolved itself into a desire for "economic democracy" and the hope that Gandhian tactics ("positive action") would always be viable. One resolution expressed the hope that "before long the peoples of Asia and Africa [would] have broken their centuries' old chains of colonialism. Then as free nations, they [would] stand united to consolidate and safeguard their liberties from the restoration

of Western imperialism, as well as the dangers of communism.”¹⁰ Nowhere was the subject of socialism mentioned, although “foreign monopolies of finance capital” were specifically condemned.

The themes of the Sixth Pan-African Congress—non-violence, “positive action,” anti-communism, anti-imperialism, non-alignment—became the core of Nkrumah’s political approach. He has never significantly diverged from them. Those who have labeled Nkrumahism the highest stage of opportunism have missed the essential point about his political beliefs. Had he been a simple opportunist—an African Hubert Humphrey—his political path would have been much straighter and easier to pursue (and the analysis of it much less rewarding). But just as his political course was not simple, neither was his political ideology. It embraced a series of contradictory positions: anti-communism and anti-imperialism; national liberation and abstract non-violence; non-alignment and economic development through foreign investment. It was the clash between these contradictory principles and not his alleged “opportunism” that produced his erratic course in foreign and domestic policy and led finally to his undoing. To see how he tried to resolve these contradictions—for they inevitably posed themselves within the context of the Gold Coast independence movement—we must next observe how he responded to the opportunity given him by the British authorities.

The Class Basis of the Movement

Nkrumah had come to the Gold Coast with very low expectations of the possibilities for radical political activity in his new position as Secretary General of the UGCC. He regarded the UGCC as a movement “backed almost entirely by reactionaries, middle class lawyers, and merchants.” And consequently he “prepared to come to loggerheads with the executive of the UGCC” if it followed a “reactionary course.”¹¹ The opportunity to carry on Pan-African agitation in Africa was what really attracted him to the Gold Coast. For up to this time, Nkrumah

10. Colin Legum, *Pan-Africanism*, London, 1965, p. 32.

11. Nkrumah, *Ghana*, p. 63.

had thought of himself primarily as a Pan-Africanist rather than a Gold Coast nationalist. (He implies that when he received the offer to become Secretary General of the UGCC, he had only a general idea of the political and social conditions in his native country.) His rise to the leadership of the national independence movement within six months is therefore all the more remarkable.

The response of the Colonial Government to Nkrumah's growing popularity was to try to isolate him from the independence movement while at the same time granting concessions to his UGCC comrades. A commission on constitutional reform (the Coussey Constitutional Committee) was formed in June 1948. All the leading Gold Coast politicians were invited to participate—all, that is, except Nkrumah. As Dennis Austin remarks: "This was a step of great importance, and one that the intelligentsia understood very well. They were at home with committees and schemes of political reform; and they had no hesitation in responding to the government's invitation."¹²

The Conventionists saw their chance for more power with a strengthened legislature and jumped at it. They made no effort to pressure the British into including their Secretary General on the Coussey Committee. (The Conventionists' later charge that Nkrumah betrayed them by forming another political party may be evaluated accordingly.) Nkrumah's exclusion from the Coussey Committee, however, had the opposite effect from that intended. Far from isolating him, it freed him to begin organizing his own political base. He was not a required participant in the constitutional negotiations and he had no obligations to the UGCC, although he retained his membership in the organization for several months more.

With an open political field, whom did Nkrumah seek to organize? Where did he seek to establish the class base of his movement? His terms of reference were not those of Marxist revolutionaries: he did not debate whether to go first to the peasantry or the organized working class, or puzzle over the relationship his party should have to the national bourgeoisie. In

12. Dennis Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, London, 1964, p. 80.

this period, he made no specific political approach to either the trade unionists, the unorganized agricultural workers, or the independent smallholders (Mao's "middle peasants"). Instead, he sought the support of the Gold Coast's "youngmen," forming the Committee on Youth Organization in August 1948. Who were the "youngmen"?

The youngmen were not necessarily young: the leaders—Nkrumah, Kojo Botsio, and K. A. Gbedemah—were 39, 36, and 33 respectively. The term was used to describe educated "commoners": storekeepers, petty traders, clerks, junior civil servants, and primary school teachers, all of whom were likely to be among the young generation. These youngmen, essentially a petty-bourgeois stratum, were engaged in conflict on three fronts: with the indirect-rule chiefs; with the colonial system; and finally with the wealthier commoner stratum—consisting of big cocoa brokers, lawyers, upper civil servants, and contractors—which was represented by the UGCC.

The youngmen clashed with the chiefs because they were no longer willing to obey laws, follow customs, or respect an authority which had become fossilized by changing economic circumstances and undermined morally by reliance on British support.¹³ But as we shall see, only the petty traders, of all the strata within the petty bourgeoisie, were involved in direct *economic* conflict with the chiefs.

Since the early days of the cocoa industry, the chiefs, especially in Ashanti, had been able to assert control over tribal lands. The British authorities, constantly trying to create the basis for a "native" ruling class, also gave the chiefs trading monopolies. It was in this role that the chiefs were brought into conflict with the petty traders. They competed for access to capital and for trading concessions as well as for customers. The petty traders and big merchant chiefs were, however, also able to cooperate against their common enemy, the European

13. Reginald Saloway, Colonial Secretary in 1948, writes: "We had to make Chiefs who were liable to destoolment by their people into agents of an alien government. Such agents were powerless against the nationalist agitators who stirred up the militant young men among whom respect for traditional authority was already waning." "The New Gold Coast," *International Affairs*, October, 1955.

trading firms. And it was not the petty traders with whom the chiefs stood in sharpest contradiction. It was the landless agricultural laborers and sharecroppers who formed the Gold Coast's real oppressed class and who constituted the greatest potential threat to the colonial system.

The other strata of the petty bourgeoisie—teachers, clerks, independent artisans, et al—had no direct economic conflicts with the chiefs. They attacked only individual chiefs, and the basis of their attack was conservative: chiefs were criticised for violating “traditional” (pre-British) norms; chiefs were destooled for *abusing* their power, for flouting “customary” practices. The petty bourgeoisie attacked neither the legitimacy of the institution of chieftaincy nor the assumptions on which the politico-economic power of the chiefs was based.

The conflict between the petty traders and the wealthy UGCC supporters, including the big merchant chiefs, had an economic basis in competition for access to trading capital. But the main conflicts developed out of the wealthier commoner stratum's willingness to accommodate themselves to British political and economic power once token concessions had been granted. Dennis Austin describes how the conflicts between the two strata materialized in the small town of Bekwai in Ashanti:

Relations between the youngmen and the [UGCC] Committee of Management grew more strained. . . . The more nationalist-minded youngmen in the Bekwai area looked on the members of the Committee of Management as “aristocrats” who were over-friendly with the District Commissioner and the local European manager of the United Africa Company. They were also suspicious of any alliance with those in authority.¹⁴

The youngmen's grievances against colonialism, like those expressed by petty bourgeois nationalists elsewhere in Africa, arose not so much out of the hardship and suffering they experienced as out of the contrast they perceived between their circumstances and those of the Europeans with whom they dealt. Amilcar Cabral cites himself as an example: “I was an agronomist working under a European who everybody knew was

14. Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 100.

one of the biggest idiots in Guinea. I could have taught him his job with my eyes shut but he was the boss; this is something which counts a lot, this is the *confrontation* which really matters."¹⁵

Brought to this confrontation and fired with indignation, the young nationalist agronomist, whether in the Gold Coast or in "Portuguese" Guinea, has two choices: he can organize a political party which will win for himself and his petty bourgeois comrades particular redress for their particular grievances against the colonial system; or he can identify his particular injustice with the overall injustice of colonial society and organize to achieve total emancipation. This, however, requires a party not just of the petty bourgeoisie, but a party which includes all oppressed classes and strata within colonial society, one which makes the realization of the demands of the poorest and most oppressed strata of the working class the absolute moral imperative of the national independence movement.

Since the Second World War there have been numerous independence movements of the first type. When successful they have brought about a "partial political revolution." Movements of the second type have been rarer and have come to power in only two or three countries. In these latter countries the political revolution was not an end but a means to achieve universal human emancipation. Marx drew the distinction this way:

What is the basis of a partial, merely political revolution? Simply this: *a fraction of a civil society* emancipates itself and achieves a dominant position; a certain class undertakes, *from its particular situation*, a general emancipation of society. This class emancipates society as a whole, but only on condition that the whole of society is in the same situation as this class, for example, that it possesses or can acquire money or culture.¹⁶

After the partial, political revolution, the young agronomists become Ministers of Agriculture with Europeans as their subordinates. To bring about the second or "total" revolution, the

15. Cabral, *International Socialist Journal*, August 1964, p. 435.

16. Karl Marx, *Kritik des Hegelschen Staatsrechts*, tr. in *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, edited by T. B. Bottomore, New York, 1964, p. 179.

agronomists first must become revolutionaries and guerrilla fighters.

Another characteristic of "total" revolution is that the class which forms the basis of the revolutionary movement must be one which has "radical chains" to break: the Cuban *campesino*, the Russian urban working class, the United States black ghetto-dweller. Marx says that it must be a class *in* but not *of* civil society:

A sphere of society which has a universal character because its sufferings are universal, and which does not claim a particular redress because the wrong which is done to it is not a particular wrong but wrong in general. There must be formed a sphere of society which claims no traditional status but only human status, a sphere which is not opposed to particular consequences but is totally opposed to the assumptions of the . . . political system.¹⁷

The Gold Coast petty bourgeoisie was not such a class: it had no radical chains to break. To take just one example, it was not opposed to a society ruled by an economically privileged, all-powerful bureaucracy. It simply wanted that bureaucracy to be African. Consequently, the answer to the problem posed by bureaucracy was not democratic control—either now or in the future—but "Africanization."

In this respect Nkrumah was the perfect representative of the Gold Coast petty bourgeoisie. With admirable clarity he defined his position as one which opposed "particular consequences" but accepted the assumptions of the political system. We can get a vivid picture of the kind of political impact he tried to make during these early days of the movement from the report filed by a correspondent for the *Ashanti Pioneer* who covered Nkrumah's tour of the Northern Territories in March 1949. This is his account of a speech given in Tamale:

In came Kwame Nkrumah dressed in rich and attractive NT [traditional] clothes and borne on the shoulders of six stalwart men wearing voluminous red turbans. The band—the Kumasi Rhythmic Brass Band—struck the high-life tune "Yenara yen asasi ni" (This is our own land). When Kwame was seated, it took some re-inforcements to keep the crowds back, while one robust Conventionist fanned him. . . .

17. *Ibid.*, p. 182.

[Finally Nkrumah speaks.] Mr. Chairman, chiefs, brothers and sisters, and friends. For me this is indeed a unique occasion. For me history is repeating itself today. The difference is that when I last came to you I was in chains.¹⁸

We have nothing to fear but fear itself. The time has come when the affairs of this country should be handed over to the chiefs and people of this country to manage or mismanage. . . .

This country is ours. This land is ours. It belongs to our chiefs and people. It does not belong to foreigners, but we don't say that all foreigners should pack up and go. They can stay as traders, and work with us not as masters and rulers. . . .

The age of politics of words is gone. This is the age of politics of action. We don't have guns. We don't have ammunition to fight anybody. We have a great spirit, a great national soul which is manifest in our unity.

If we get s.g. [self-government] we'll transform the Gold Coast into a paradise in ten years. Why should some people in the NTs go naked? I can find no reason for it. We can improve our native looms up here in the NTs in five years under a government of the people, by the people and for the people. . . .

Wherefore my advice is "Seek ye first the political kingdom, and all things will be added unto you." . . .¹⁹

The political kingdom Nkrumah speaks of here is the objective correlative of Marx's "partial political revolution." The "paradise" he holds out still maintains the traditional powers of the chiefs and the commercial powers of the British trading firms. Now, however, Ghanaians will wear pants while waiting in the political kingdom for "all things" to be added unto them. This was the vision. The agency was to be the Convention People's Party.

Storming the Political Kingdom

On June 12, 1949, Nkrumah founded the CPP in Accra. Sixty thousand people attended the ceremonies: the largest popular assembly in Gold Coast history. A year had passed since the British had created the Coussey Committee. The government had begun negotiating with what was ostensibly an embryonic native ruling class. But by this time their ne-

18. Nkrumah is referring to his arrest in March 1948, after the Christianborg riots. He had been detained in Tamale.

19. *Ashanti Pioneer*, March 5, 1949.

gotiating partners were merely African politicians with British titles but no Gold Coast constituencies. In 1949, Sir Gerald Creasy, after only a few months in the country, left the Gold Coast "for reasons of health." He was replaced by Sir Charles Arden-Clarke.

The new party was careful not to make itself appear to have broken completely with the past. It even kept the word "Convention" in the party title to emphasize its political lineage. How, then, did its leaders justify founding a new nationalist organization? Nkrumah tried to make it clear to those who remained in the UGCC that it was the leadership and not the rank and file which the new party opposed. The leaders of the UGCC were willing to fight only for "full self-government within the shortest possible time"; the CPP was organized to bring "self-government NOW." But even this distinction had less militant implications than might be expected. The reason why the CPP had to fight for "self-government NOW," according to Nkrumah, was because the Labor Party was now in power in Britain. "It would be more favorably disposed towards our demand. If the Conservatives were returned to power the following year, our struggle for independence might be suppressed."²⁰

The operational differences between the CPP and the UGCC on the question of independence were actually narrow and turned on issues of low radical yield. These differences were not like those between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks (whether the revolution should be proletarian or bourgeois); or like those that divided the FLN from the Algerian Communist Party (whether to fight for independence or remain within the French "Community"). Their differences were strikingly like those which separate the Congress of Racial Equality from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in the United States. The NAACP is wealthier, better established, and more solidly bourgeois. It aims at reforming certain aspects of a system whose assumptions it shares. It carries out its reformist attempts through the channels that the society provides: the ballot box, the court room, legislative lobbying, etc. The other group, while generally younger, more radical, and

20. Nkrumah, *Ghana*, p. 103.

less affluent, does not reject the assumptions of the society—although it sometimes questions them. Less affluent and less well-established, it is less able to utilize society's channels of reform: it attempts to use non-violence or direct action, exerting exogenous pressure on institutions it wishes to change or control. At a given point, after pressure from outside the system has been successful, it is possible for the less privileged reformist group to be allowed to work inside the system.

This was the situation in which the CPP found itself in 1949. To achieve its objectives, it had only to steer a course between two political extremes. The right extreme was conveniently defined by the position of the UGCC, which had tied itself to whatever concessions the Coussey Committee was willing to grant. Clearly, any position less militant than this would cost the CPP popular support and possibly cause a split.

The left extreme was any course which offered opposition not just to British rule, but to colonial society as a whole. This "adventurist" course could be avoided by frequent demonstrations of obeisance to the colonial "rules of the game," which were generally defined negatively: no preaching of class warfare, no resort to armed collective defense, no suggestion of independence outside the Commonwealth/Sterling area.

The programmatic reflection of the CPP's willingness to abide by these "rules of the game" can be seen in its first six-point manifesto:

(1) To fight relentlessly by all constitutional means for the achievement of full "self-government NOW" for the chiefs and people of the Gold Coast.

(2) To serve as the vigorous conscious political vanguard for removing all forms of oppression and for the establishment of a democratic government.

(3) To secure and maintain the complete unity of the chiefs and people of the Colony, Ashanti, Northern Territories and the Trans-Volta.

(4) To work in the interest of the trade union movement in the country for better conditions of employment.

(5) To work for a proper reconstruction of a better Gold Coast in which the people shall have the right to live and govern themselves as a free people.

(6) To assist and facilitate in any way possible the realization of a united and self-governing West Africa.²¹

Could the Labor government regard this program with anything less than unqualified approbation? As long as the CPP's "relentless fight" was carried out by "constitutional means" the party was still playing according to the rules; as long as the vanguard aimed only at such moderate and unqualified goals as "democracy," "unity," and "a better Gold Coast"; as long as its perspective for the working class was no wider than "better conditions of employment," the CPP would no doubt become a useful partner in the Commonwealth/Sterling area.

The publication of the Coussey Commission's recommendations in October, 1949, tested the party's ability to adhere to its middle course. The Report proposed a form of semi-responsible government: an executive council of three *ex-officio* and eight representative ministers and a nationally elected assembly. The assembly finally decided upon was a unicameral legislature, two thirds elected by popular franchise and one third elected by the territorial councils of chiefs. In addition, the Governor retained his "reserve powers."²²

The CPP dilemma was this: the Report provided for a government which was far from sovereign. Should the party continue to abide by the colonial rules of the game—by entering the elections—or should it be guided by its program and fight relentlessly for "self-government NOW"? Characteristically, Nkrumah tried to split the difference. He attacked the Report as a "Trojan gift horse" and as "bogus and fraudulent," and spoke of the need for "positive action."²³ But at the same time,

21. *Ibid.*, p. 101.

22. The UGCC members opposed both the retention of reserve powers and the presence of *ex officio* members on the Executive. Their opposition expressed itself, not in resignation from the Committee, but in a minority report.

23. Nkrumah's definition of positive action was "the adoption of all legitimate and constitutional means by which we could attack the forces of imperialism in the country. The weapons were legitimate political agitation, newspaper and educational campaigns, and, as a last resort, the constitutional application of strikes, boycotts, and non-cooperation based on the principle of absolute non-violence as used by Gandhi." *Ghana*, pp. 111-112. Nkrumah's is a conservative interpretation of Gandhi, who never stipulated that non-violence must be "constitutional."

he entered into negotiations to liberalize the Constitution with Arden-Clarke and Reginald Saloway, the Colonial Secretary.

Just when it seemed as if an orderly process of colonial devolution would be worked out after all, the strongly anticolonial feelings of the Ghanaian people upset everything. Nkrumah himself was partially responsible for the militant temper of the masses. "Get ready, people of the Gold Coast," he told a huge rally in Accra on December 15, "the era of positive action draws nigh."²⁴ Nkrumah gave the government two weeks to accept the CPP demands. Everything was set for a confrontation. The Trade Union Congress began to prepare for a general strike; the people in cities readied themselves for a boycott of European stores.

Nkrumah, however, tried to postpone the conflict. Numerous meetings took place between Nkrumah, Arden-Clarke, and Saloway. The *Evening News*, the CPP newspaper, twice announced that positive action would be postponed. And once Nkrumah called it off altogether. Saloway's version is this: "Nkrumah publicly called off 'positive action' and tried hard to get the Trade Union Congress to call off the general strike, but the TUC no longer had any control over the wild men. [Moreover] Dr. Danquah taunted Nkrumah with having sold himself to the Colonial Secretary and thus infuriated the rank and file of the CPP who forced Nkrumah to retract."²⁵ According to Arden-Clarke's version:

The party leaders had been officially informed and were well aware that they had a perfectly constitutional way of achieving power and gaining their objective if their candidates at the forthcoming election were returned. I have good reason to believe that some at least of the party leaders would have preferred not to resort to "positive action" but to await the results of the general election, the outcome of which they were fairly confident. But they found themselves enmeshed in the coils of their own propaganda. The tail wagged the dog.²⁶

Whether the CPP leaders did or did not want a positive action campaign became irrelevant on the 6th of January when

24. *Evening News* (Accra), December 16, 1949.

25. Saloway, *International Affairs*, October, 1955, p. 47.

26. Charles Arden-Clarke, "Eight Years in the Gold Coast," *African Affairs*, January 1958.

the TUC forced the issue by calling the general strike. Now the CPP was left with a simpler choice: either side with the British government (which warned that "the so-called 'general strike' is illegal") or back the workers. After two days of negotiations and conferences, Nkrumah announced his support for the general strike. He agreed to begin positive action on January 8. It would "take the form of a simple and fundamentally spiritual exercise."²⁷

The strike came off badly. Leadership was lacking and there was little sense of working-class solidarity. The party newspaper was closed down, scabs were successfully introduced, and "the extensive use of a new force of mobile police limited unrest in the main towns to sporadic outbursts of violence."²⁸ During the strike, Nkrumah appeared to one British correspondent as "the most worried man in the Gold Coast." Mr. Nkrumah, he wrote, "has been sincere in not wanting violence or a 'show-down.' He seems not to have realized that his followers take quite literally everything he says."²⁹ The *Times* also portrayed Nkrumah as the unwilling victim of popular forces gone out of control: "Against the better interests of his party and the Gold Coast, Mr. Nkrumah allowed himself to be drawn into the launching of a civil disobedience campaign accompanied by a general strike."³⁰

On the 21st of January, the government felt confident enough of its command of the situation to arrest all important TUC and CPP leaders. Charges ranged from sedition to "coercing" the government and prompting an illegal strike. The trials themselves produced no speeches in the manner of "History Will Absolve Me." The spirit of courageous defiance was clearly absent. Dzenkle Dzewu, a member of the CPP Central Committee, denied knowing what "positive action" was. Thomas Hutton-Mills, one of the few lawyers in the party, admitted that he knew what positive action was, but claimed that when positive action was declared on January 8th he was "taken aback." Hutton-Mills maintained that he disliked positive action

27. *Ashanti Pioneer*, January 7, 1950.

28. Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 89.

29. *West Africa*, January 14, 1950.

30. *The Times* (London), January 23, 1950.

and made speeches against it. (He was eventually given the lightest sentence.) The CPP treasurer went even further in his denials. He claimed that he was not a member of the CPP and denied point blank that he had ever passed money into the bank on behalf of the CPP.

Only Nkrumah admitted having anything to do with the positive action campaign. Against the charge of promoting an illegal strike, however, Nkrumah defended himself vigorously. He denied having called on anybody to strike: he maintained that he even tried to stop the strike when he heard of it. Furthermore, Nkrumah said that he did not know of any section of the people which had struck because of the CPP. To the charge of "coercing" the government, Nkrumah replied that he had just called off the positive action campaign the day he was arrested.

This was undoubtedly the nadir of the Gold Coast independence movement. Reporters commented on the lack of nationalist fervor at the trials; the crowds themselves began to grow smaller; and in the working-class districts of Sekondi-Takoradi and the adjoining mining areas, there was considerable bitterness over the failure of the strike and the positive action campaign. Nkrumah was sentenced to three one-year terms to be served concurrently. Others were given sentences ranging down to Hutton-Mills' four months. By giving Nkrumah three one-year terms, however, the government had kept him legally eligible to run for office. As Nkrumah later remarked: "Few people realized that by our law, anyone who is convicted to a term of imprisonment not exceeding one year, is entitled to be registered on the electoral roll."³¹

With Nkrumah and the other party leaders in a British jail, the Gold Coast government was in an even more precarious position than with them out of jail. Support began to gather again for the CPP. The main organizers during this period were Gbedemah—who had been just released from jail when Nkrumah went in—and Mrs. Olabisi Renner, a lawyer whose husband was serving his sentence with the other trade unionists and party leaders.

31. Nkrumah, *Ghana*, p. 133.

Two months after the trial, municipal elections were held in Accra. Only the CPP organizers obtained complete voters lists and saw to it that their supporters got to the polls. The combination of efficient organization and live martyrs produced a notable victory: the CPP won every seat on the council, defeating the incumbent UGCC members by large margins. It was obvious that the CPP was the most powerful political force in the country. Arden-Clarke summarizes the position of his government in relation to the CPP at this time:

Nkrumah and his party had the mass of the people behind them and there was no other party with appreciable public support to which one could turn. Without Nkrumah, the Constitution would be stillborn and if nothing came of all the hopes, aspirations and concrete proposals for a greater measure of self-government, there would no longer be any faith in the good intentions of the British Government and the Gold Coast would be plunged into disorders, violence and bloodshed.³²

From these premises only one conclusion could emerge: Nkrumah must be brought into the government. Arden-Clarke therefore allowed Nkrumah to run for office while in prison. The prison officials helped process Nkrumah's registration papers and enabled him to pay his election deposit. "My forms," Nkrumah recalls, "were completed and submitted to the authorities a few minutes before registration period closed and the campaign committee got to work on my behalf."³³ Under the election slogan, "Vote wisely and God will save Ghana from the Imperialists," the campaign committee began the tasks of electoral politics: fund raising, party caucuses, and vote drives, all of which have been well described by Dennis Austin.³⁴

The 1951 manifesto, entitled "Towards the Goal," shows the CPP's mild reformist objectives:

- (1) Constitutional: The Coussey Committee let the country down by prolonging white imperialism. The CPP will fight for self-government NOW.

32. Arden-Clarke, *African Affairs*, January, 1958. Cited in Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 150.

33. Nkrumah, *Ghana*, p. 133.

34. Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, pp. 103-152.

- (2) Political: An upper house of the Legislature, known as the Senate, shall be created for the Chiefs. Universal suffrage at the age of 21. Direct elections with no property or residential qualifications for candidates.
- (3) Economic: A five year Economic Plan. . . .
 - (i) Immediate materialization of the Volta hydroelectric scheme.
 - (ii) Railway lines to be doubled and extended.
 - (iii) Roads to be modernized and extended.
 - (iv) Canals to join rivers.
 - (v) Progressive mechanization of agriculture.
 - (vi) Special attention will be given to the swollen shoot disease; farmers will be given control of the Cocoa Industry Board funds. . . .
 - (ix) Industrialization will be carried out with all energy.
- (4) Social: Education
 - (i) A unified system of free compulsory elementary, secondary, and technical education up to 16 years of age.
 - (ii) The University College to be brought up to University status.
 - (iii) A planned campaign to abolish illiteracy.
- (5) Family Assistance
 - (i) A free national health service.
 - (ii) A high standard housing programme. . . .
 - (iii) A piped-water supply in all parts of the country. . . .
 - (iv) A national insurance scheme.³⁵

There was certainly nothing about these goals that could give offense to anyone. The economic platform of the manifesto, in fact, reflected the main provisions of Governor Arden-Clarke's "Ten-Year Plan" of 1951. Who could object to modern roads, or canals that join rivers, or mechanized agriculture? (And what political party would be *for* swollen shoot?) In contrast, the program failed even to mention agricultural workers or trade unions.

The trade unions began to play a smaller and smaller role in CPP activities. Militants within the TUC were divided on what relationship should be maintained with the CPP: should they continue to work within the CPP or should they form a separate party? Pobee Biney and Anthony Woode both ran

35. *Ibid.*, p. 130.

successfully under the CPP label. Within the Miners' Union, however, there were attempts to organize a "Labor Party," but nothing came of them.

How did the Ghanaian people as a whole react to the CPP programs for gradual reform? To what extent were they politically stimulated by "independence NOW"—which obviously meant later? On the basis of the 1951 election returns, two attitudes are reflected. The first is that the CPP was much more popular than its main opposition, the UGCC businessmen. Against the UGCC, the CPP won 34 out of 38 popularly contested seats, and its majority in some urban areas reached over ninety percent.

The second attitude shown by the 1951 elections is indifference on the part of the majority of the Ghanaian people to the CPP and its program. Despite intensive efforts by the British colonial administration to obtain a large number of registered votes, *less than a majority* of the adult population took the trouble to register. (See Table 1 below.) And when it came time to cast ballots in the municipalities, the major locus of CPP strength, the turnout was again less than a majority—47.2 percent of registered voters.³⁶ In comparison with other West African elections—e.g. Western Nigeria in 1956, Senegal in 1957, and especially Guinea in 1958—this is a very low figure.³⁷

Table 1
Number of Registered Voters, 1951³⁸

<i>Area</i>	<i>Estimated population</i>	<i>Eligible electorate</i>	<i>Registered Number</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Colony (incl. So. Togo)	2,153,310	1,095,190	350,525	32.0
Ashanti	784,210	398,590	220,658	55.4
Municipalities	290,230	141,480	90,275	64.1
TOTAL	3,227,750	1,635,260	661,458	40.5

36. As elections in rural areas were indirect, it is impossible to know what the turnout was. However, the registration figures show that city residents were much more interested in the election.

37. See Kenneth Robinson and W. J. M. Mackenzie, *Five African Elections*, Oxford, 1960, and Ruth Schachter-Morgenthau, *Political Parties in French-Speaking West Africa*, Oxford, 1964, for information on these elections.

38. Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 113.

The mode of expression of Gold Coast nationalism was now completely altered—spontaneous mass demonstrations were replaced by Western-style elections and Western-style apathy. In the space of three years, the Gold Coast had reverted back to the status of a model colony. The Christianborg uprising had at first been commemorated as the beginning of resistance to British colonialism; now it symbolized a tragic communications breakdown which finally forced the British to recognize the need for constitutional reform.

After the 1951 election, the CPP turned to what it felt was the way to win independence for the Gold Coast—full cooperation with the colonial government in order to prove that the country was “ready” for self-government. The accommodation reached was so thorough-going that during the next six years the CPP never felt it necessary to leave the government.

All this had repercussions on independence movements throughout Africa, especially in British West Africa. Arden-Clarke’s “act-of-grace” in freeing Nkrumah from prison began to take on the same significance for African nationalists that Dienbienphu would soon gain for Asian nationalists—both marked the end of European colonial power and indicated a specific means for achieving power.

3

KING COCOA

There was no alternative government to the CPP, none of whom had any training in public affairs. We had to build anew with what was then a crowd of agitators as our material.

—Reginald Saloway, Colonial Secretary

On February 10, 1951, the Gold Coast government announced the electoral victory of the Convention People's Party. On the 12th Nkrumah was released from Fort James prison. At nine o'clock the next morning, he was invited to meet Arden-Clarke at the Governor's residence. Arden-Clarke describes the occasion:

That meeting was redolent of mutual suspicion and mistrust. We were like two dogs for the first time, sniffing around each other with hackles half raised, trying to decide whether to bite or wag our tails. Soon afterwards, Nkrumah came to see me alone and we were able to get to know each other. This time the hackles were down, and before the end the tails were wagging. . . . That was the beginning of a close, friendly, and, if I may say so, not unfruitful partnership.¹

At this first press conference after release from prison, Nkrumah, now the "Leader of Government Business," announced that he was prepared to give the Coussey Constitution a chance to work, even though it had its "bogus" aspects. Nkrumah assured his listeners that he had no intention of nationalizing any Gold Coast industry. He added: "I would like to make it absolutely clear that I am a friend of Britain. . . . I want for the Gold Coast Dominion status within the British Commonwealth.

1. Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, "Eight Years of Transition in Ghana," *African Affairs*, January, 1958, p. 34.

I am no Communist and never have been, and I stand for no discrimination against any race or individual.”²

The other newly elected party members prepared for their new roles as parliamentarians. King George V Memorial Hall in Accra was hastily transformed into a miniature House of Commons: during the three weeks between August 14 and September 6, the interiors were remodeled to resemble as closely as possible the Commons Chamber in London.³

Nkrumah called the post-election period, up to the development of the first serious internal opposition in 1954, the period of “tactical action.” Tactical action was the method whereby the party leaders worked through the ordinary channels of British colonial government to bring about liberation from colonial rule. According to the imperatives of tactical action, Nkrumah would be drawn into what would *appear* to be collaboration with the British. No one, however, should have been fooled by appearances: “Kwame Nkrumah now sitting with the imperialists in power is forever vigilant. He knows he is there by the will of the people and his work is to see their welfare [sic].”⁴

While the CPP imagined themselves getting the better of the British through tactical action, the British prided themselves on their own subtleties. Arden-Clarke describes how he dealt with his CPP “partners”:

We learnt for example, how effective the device of changing names could be. It is, I suppose, true that “a rose by any other name would smell as sweet,” but we learnt that if we changed the name of Leader of Government Business to Prime Minister and Executive Council to Cabinet, without in any way altering their functions and powers, or the name of Chief Commissioner to Regional Officer, or District Commissioner to Government Agent, they all seemed to smell much sweeter in the public nose. That device certainly helped us to get over some difficult periods.⁵

Tactical action and British nominalism enabled the “not unfruitful partnership” to continue. Meanwhile, the left-wing trade union agitators, such as Turkson Ocran, general-secretary

2. *West Africa*, February 17, 1951.

3. *West Africa*, September 15, 1951.

4. *Freedom*, CPP monthly, December 1952, no. 1.

5. Arden-Clarke, “Eight Years of Transition in Ghana,” p. 36.

of the TUC, were expelled from the CPP for alleged communist connections. And the remaining agitators from the city squares and market places were remolded into practitioners of the Westminster parliamentary system.

Inside the scale-modeled replica of Westminster, however, there was little actual power to exercise. The "mother" country still controlled the police and army; the Colonial Governor retained his "reserve powers"; British bureaucrats held most of the senior positions in the civil service; British stockholders owned the gold mines; over 90 percent of the import-export trade was controlled by 13 foreign trading companies ("the firms"); the yearly budgets were prepared back in London by the Colonial Office.

Yet the most obvious instrument of foreign economic control—the one which had the most long-lasting and disruptive effects on the Ghanaian economy—was a government agency on which the CPP dutifully served. This was the Cocoa Marketing Board. But in order to understand and evaluate the effects of CMB policies on Ghana, it is first necessary to know something about who the Ghanaian cocoa producers are.

Agricultural Classes and Strata

The owners of Ghanaian cocoa farms are Ghanaian. How did this anomaly occur? Not because of the widely held British assumption that the plantation economy "is necessarily incompatible with the moral obligations to weaker peoples on which Native policy is professedly based."⁶ Only the morality of the ledger sheet had brought the British to the conclusion that "they would be wiser to avoid competing with the Native cultivators." The United Africa Company tried unsuccessfully for 15 years to produce cocoa on a competitive basis with Ghanaian cocoa farmers.⁷

Unable to compete on the land with the African producers, the British plantation owners retired to the coastal areas. Africans not only cleared, planted, and plucked the cocoa; they also

6. W. K. Hancock, *Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs*, Vol. II, Part 2, p. 174.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 188.

organized the marketing system. The British trader, who, it is usually assumed, "taught the natives" the elementary facts of economic life, came in contact with the cocoa only after it had been produced, marketed, and transported. "He merely sat at (or near) the port receiving the produce and had no more knowledge than any other outsider as to how production was organized."⁸

Another widespread myth about Ghanaian cocoa production is that cocoa is farmed by independent smallholders. Polly Hill calls this "the myth of the peasant farmer, who, though unfamiliar with the cash economy, nonetheless succeeded in the space of twenty years in transforming the economy of Ghana."⁹ The mythology specifies that this peasant farmer has only a small amount of land—one or two acres—and does all his work himself. But while the heterogeneity of the social organization of cocoa farming in Ghana almost defies generalization, it is clear that in both Ashanti and Southern Ghana the cocoa landowner is an employer of labor. Polly Hill's field investigations throughout Ghana showed that the proportion of independent smallholders (those who perform all their own labor) is probably less than 20 percent of the total.

That section of the owning class which is distinguished by its ability to employ labor can itself be broken down into two strata: the capitalist farmers who have been able to accumulate enough capital to set themselves up as creditors; and the small farmers who have fallen into debt and pledged their land.

The agricultural working class contains several strata which can be distinguished by the way they are remunerated. The so-called *abusa* gets one third of the value of the cocoa he plucks; other strata are paid on a daily or yearly basis. A survey carried out in 1959 established that for every landowner, six to eight caretakers and laborers were employed.¹⁰

The time-rate laborers appear to be the most oppressed strata of the agricultural working class. They have no tools, no

8. Polly Hill, *The Migrant Cocoa Farmers of Southern Ghana*, Cambridge, 1963, p. 173.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

10. Tony Killick, "Cocoa," in *A Study of Contemporary Ghana*, Vol. I, ed. by Walter Birmingham, I. Neustadt, E. N. Omaboe; London, 1966, p. 239.

work clothes, and do not bring their wives and children to live with them on the cocoa farms. All strata of the agricultural working class are, however, relatively poorly paid, uneducated, and isolated from political life.

While this attempt to categorize the agricultural classes may do some violence to the complexity of actual land relations, consider the violence done by those analysts who have written about Nkrumah's dealings with "the farmers." An undifferentiated mass of "farmers" exists only in the pages of their books and articles. They write as if the day laborer who often owns not even the shirt he wears, and a rich capitalist farmer chief had identical economic interests.

The CPP politicians also like to speak in terms of "the farmers." As Hill points out, they "assume that all Ghanaian cocoa-farmers are wealthy."¹¹ As for the agricultural working class, it figured in the plans and programs of the party as did the helots in the Aristotelian *polis*. They were the obscene basis (about which polite discourse forbids discussion) on whose labor the whole superstructure of the state was built.

The Cocoa Marketing Board

In 1948 Britain's Labor government established the Cocoa Marketing Board as the Gold Coast's sole buyer, grader, seller, and exporter of cocoa. The ostensible purpose was to insulate the Ghana cocoa "farmer" from the uncertainties of the world cocoa market. The CMB would buy all domestically produced cocoa at a relatively stable price and resell it on the world market at an inevitably fluctuating price. By setting the domestic price lower than the world price, a reserve fund could be built up which would serve a number of important ends: it would provide savings which could be used to develop the country's economy; it would drain off excess purchasing power and thus prevent inflation; and it would provide a source from which the cocoa producer's income could be maintained in case of a collapse of world prices.

Table 2, giving prices paid to producers and export prices

11. Hill, *Migrant Cocoa Farmers*, p. 19.

from 1947 to 1961, shows that at least part of the theory behind the CMB was conscientiously put into practice. Throughout the entire decade of the 1950's the price paid to producers fluctuated within narrow limits (from a minimum of £131 to a maximum of £149 per ton), while the export price was consistently higher and usually very much higher (for the whole period 1947 to 1961, the producer price averaged only 54.7 percent of the export price). If we keep in mind that cocoa is far and away the most important export of Ghana, accounting for between half and three quarters of total exports, it is immediately apparent that during these crucially important formative years of Ghana's history, a very large part of the country's economic surplus was being collected and centralized by one institution, the Cocoa Marketing Board. And if we also keep

Table 2
Cocoa Producer Prices and Export Prices
1947-48 to 1960-61¹²

Crop year	Pounds per ton		Producer price as percent of export price
	Producer price	Average export price	
1947-48	75	201	37.3
1948-49	121	137	88.3
1949-50	84	178	47.2
1950-51	131	269	48.7
1951-52	149	245	60.8
1952-53	131	231	56.7
1953-54	134	358	37.4
1954-55	134	353	38.0
1955-56	149	222	67.1
1956-57	149	189	78.8
1957-58	134	304	44.1
1958-59	134	280	48.0
1959-60	112	226	49.6
1960-61	112	175	64.0

in mind that the extent and direction of a country's development depend on how it uses its surplus, we can appreciate the importance of the question: *What did the Cocoa Marketing Board do with the hundreds of millions of pounds it accumulated*

12. Tony Killick, "The Economics of Cocoa," in *A Study of Contemporary Ghana*, p. 369.

by selling cocoa on the world market at nearly twice the price it paid to the African cocoa producer?

The War, the Pound, and the Empire

To answer this question it is necessary to place the Gold Coast, and later Ghana, in its proper historical and international setting.

To finance her enormous import requirements during the Second World War at a time when her capacity to export was drastically curtailed, Great Britain was obliged to borrow heavily abroad. Some of this debt was of course in foreign currencies—and much more would have been if it hadn't been for Lend Lease—but a very large part took the form of so-called blocked sterling balances held by Britain's colonies and semi-colonies. What happened was that these dependent countries sent their goods to the United Kingdom in exchange for pounds sterling which for the time being they were unable to spend. The total of Britain's sterling liabilities increased in this way from under £500 million before the war to over £3,000 million after the war. Of this increase India (including what later became Pakistan) contributed £1,138, and Egypt and the Sudan contributed £402 million.¹³ These sterling balances represented a form of forced saving for their owners and were far in excess of the various countries' needs for monetary reserves. So as the war drew to an end, "the voices of holders demanding payment were becoming louder."¹⁴

The British tried to get countries like India and Egypt to write off their balances as contributions to the war effort but for obvious reasons were turned down. The balances therefore remained as a source of constant pressure on the pound. Nor in the conditions of the postwar world were they the only danger to the pound. Britain needed imports of all kinds to make good the losses and damage of war; export capacity was slow to recover; military requirements, occasioned by unrest in the empire and the incipient Cold War, continued at a high level.

13. Phillip W. Bell, *The Sterling Area in the Post-War World*, Oxford, 1958, p. 261.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 260.

The inevitable result of all these pressures and needs was a series of postwar financial and balance-of-payments crises which threatened Britain with international bankruptcy and reduction to the status of a second or third class power. It was in these circumstances that two things happened. First, the United States organized a huge rescue operation, culminating in the Marshall Plan, which poured nearly \$7 billion of aid into the United Kingdom in the decade following the war. And second, the British government itself (under the control of the Labor Party, be it noted) took unprecedented steps to force its remaining colonies to transfer their surpluses to London to support the pound. The heart and core of this new imperial strategy was the establishment of a network of marketing boards, of which the Cocoa Marketing Board in the Gold Coast was just one.

Marketing boards were established in Malaya and East Africa as well as in West Africa. In West Africa there was a marketing board for every commodity from peanuts to mahogany. In Nigeria four marketing boards controlled 69 percent by value of all exports and 78 percent of all non-mineral imports.¹⁵ In the Gold Coast the corresponding percentages were 69 percent and 90 percent. In Sierra Leone and Gambia the percentages were even higher. In these four colonies the marketing boards controlled practically 100 percent of all agricultural exports produced by Africans, including even the most insignificant commodities. In Nigeria, for example, the Groundnut (peanut) Marketing Board even controlled sunflower seeds, which were not listed on trade returns.¹⁶

By establishing the marketing boards throughout its colonies, Great Britain, once the free trade center of the world, carried out what was perhaps the most thorough-going attempt to control the marketplace since the Diocletian Code. From Accra to Mombasa and across the Indian Ocean to Kuala Lumpur, the marketing boards all operated in the same way. First, buying and selling monopolies were established; then producer

15. Minerals of course were owned by foreigners, generally the British themselves. And one can imagine the kind of reception the shareholder of a British owned gold mine would give to a proposal to give his company a percentage of the world price for its gold ore and withhold the remainder (so as to stabilize their income, prevent inflation, etc.).

16. P. T. Bauer, *West African Trade*, London, 1963, p. 276.

prices were set below the world market price; then the boards began to accumulate the difference.

What did the marketing boards do with the money? A large part of it, they simply sent off to London where it was held as sterling balances.¹⁷ These sterling balances were generally invested in long-term British government securities. *In other words, the colonies were lending money to Great Britain.* Moreover, the interest rate on these securities was extremely low: 0.5 percent before 1950; from 2 to 4 percent after 1952.¹⁸ Yet during the period from June 30, 1945, to June 30, 1956, sterling balances accumulated by the colonies showed a continual upward trend.

Table 3¹⁹
Colonial Sterling Balances
(Millions of Pounds)

June 30 1945	Dec. 31 1950	June 30 1951	June 30 1954	June 30 1956
670	735	908	1,183	1,301

Colonial Dollar and Capital Exports

During this postwar period the British Labor Party tried to distinguish itself from previous regimes by asserting that its colonial policy was based on "broader conceptions of development and welfare and a recognition that British funds must 'prime the pump.'"²⁰ But in reality it was the funds of the colonial peoples which were "priming the pump" of postwar British economic recovery. As one British financial expert pointed out in 1953, "the investment of £1,000 million in Britain does not accord well with commonly held ideas on the desirable direction of capital flow between countries at different levels of economic development."²¹

Ghana's contribution to the flow of colonial capital to-

17. The terms "sterling balance" and "sterling liability" are used interchangeably.

18. Phillip W. Bell, *The Sterling Area in the Post-War World*, p. 271.

19. W. M. Scammell, *International Monetary Policy*, New York, 1961, p. 262.

20. Cmd. 7433, *The Colonial Empire (1947-1948)*, p. 2.

21. A. D. Hazelwood, "Colonial External Finance Since the War," *Review of Economic Studies*, December 1953, p. 49.

wards Britain, together with the role of the CMB in increasing it, are indicated by Table 4. Not only did Britain's colonies

Table 4
The Cocoa Marketing Board and Ghanaian Reserves²²
(Millions of Pounds)

Year	Total CMB proceeds	Paid to cocoa producers	Total Ghanaian reserves
1948	41.5	15.4	n.a.
1949	37.5	21.2	n.a.
1950	45.1	21.2	113.3
1951	70.3	34.2	137.2
1952	51.6	31.4	145.1
1953	57.1	32.5	160.1
1954	74.7	28.0	197.4
1955	77.5	29.5	208.2
1956	52.3	35.0	189.8
1957	50.7	39.9	171.4

provide her with sterling, however; they also supplied the "mother" country with dollars which were in extremely short supply during the early postwar period. Britain needed dollars to import United States capital goods to rebuild her shattered industrial plant.²³ Much is made of the sacrifices made by British consumers during the period when the Labor Party reestablished British capitalism. Yet to a large extent it was the Asian and African peasant who played the decisive role and experienced the real "austerity."

Ghana's role in providing Britain with capital and specifically with dollars, was larger than that of any other colony with the exception of Malaya. As Arthur Creech Jones, former Colonial Secretary, remarked: "I think we should be conscious of the very considerable contribution which the Gold Coast has made to the Sterling Area."²⁴

22. Adapted from Tony Killick, "The Economics of Cocoa," in *A Study of Contemporary Ghana*, pp. 360, 367.

23. After 1958, when sterling became freely convertible into dollars, this aspect of the Anglo-Ghanaian financial relationship disappeared. Similarly, after the 1957 sterling crisis which the British were able to overcome only by relying on United States loans, confidence in the British pound increased—at least for a while. The necessity for the colonies and other members of the sterling area to hold increasing amounts of sterling balances diminished accordingly.

24. *Daily Graphic* (Accra), December 20, 1955.

Ghana was able to make such a substantial "contribution" to the Sterling Area because she sold large amounts of cocoa to the United States. The United States of course paid in dollars, a percentage of which were then allocated to Ghana. Table 5 shows how much Ghana was able to retain of her dollar earnings during the pre-independence period of CPP rule.

Table 5
Ghanaian Dollar Allocations, 1951-1954²⁵

Year	Value of Ghanaian exports to the Dollar Area (£)	Percent of dollar earnings allocated to Ghana
1951	30,047,000	17
1952	25,539,000	18
1953	25,407,000	21
1954	20,009,000	16

The dollar contribution that a member of the Sterling Area made was directly proportional to its weakness. Countries like Ghana turned over more than 80 percent; the powerful capitalist countries claimed whatever they wanted for themselves. As Sir Dennis Robertson explained, the disadvantages suffered by African members of the Sterling Area meant more than simply being unable to import goods costing dollars:

It meant that each country as a *country* agreed to hand over its surplus dollar earnings to Mother in exchange for sterling, and to go to Mother when it wanted extra dollars to spend. Naturally the degree of confidence with which it exercised or presented claims on the dollar pool depended partly on its political status: the little black children who were often the best earners could be smacked on the head if they showed too great a propensity to spend dollars, while the grown-up white daughters, who were often pretty extravagant, could only be quietly reasoned with.²⁶

The British had a clear interest in the continuation of these CMB policies following the CPP's rise to power in 1951. Had Nkrumah broken the CMB's marketing monopoly and adjusted the domestic cocoa price to the world level, or used CMB profits within the Gold Coast, the British economy would have been seriously affected. But Nkrumah and the CPP did not choose

25. Source: Gold Coast Legislative Assembly, *Debates*, August 9, 1955.

26. *Britain in the World Economy*, London, 1954, p. 39.

to use their power as members of the CMB to strike out in directions that would have led to a confrontation with British power. The CMB under CPP control continued to levy what were in effect huge export taxes, send cocoa profits to Great Britain, and thus help Britain maintain the pound while renouncing, or at best postponing, attempts to start Ghana in the direction of economic independence and development.

The Cocoa Marketing Board and the policies it pursued both before and after the CPP acquired representation on it, go far to explain what appears to be a strange paradox of Ghanaian development. In a country as productive as Ghana, with Africans growing hundreds of millions of dollars worth of cocoa annually on African-owned soil, one would naturally expect the emergence of a powerful class of African capitalists. We can now see that owing to the channeling of the profits of African cocoa production via the CMB to the "mother" country, growth of the Ghanaian capitalist class was stunted. There were some wealthy men like George Grant in timber and the Ocansey family, which had made a fortune from moving pictures. But a class of African businessmen, supplied with African capital, producing commodities for domestic consumption or for export, did not exist.

Instead what did develop in Ghana was a stratum of small businessmen, small contractors, wholesalers, capitalist farmers, cocoa brokers, etc., *who wanted to become* full-fledged African capitalists. At the same time, there had arisen the large petty bourgeois stratum composed of the elementary school graduates. It was this latter stratum which was able to step into the power vacuum caused by the absence of a true African capitalist class.

The "Atomic Bomb"

It would be a mistake to think of the CPP leaders who were the representatives and spokesmen for this petty bourgeois stratum as simply agents of the British: they were never stooges like the "direct-rule" chiefs of French West Africa. The CPP had its basis of support among the youngmen, and within certain limits prescribed by their relation to British power, they tried to advance the interests of their constituents. The primary

instrument through which the CPP sought to secure its political base without infringing on British financial prerogatives was the Cocoa Purchasing Company, founded in 1952 as a subsidiary of the CMB. But while the CPC's activities strengthened the CPP's base among both debtor and creditor farmers of southern Ghana, they alienated the native cocoa brokers and the capitalist farmers of Ashanti. Thus the policies of the CPP continued the process of fission within the nationalist movement that had begun at the time of the Coussey Committee.

When the Cocoa Purchasing Company was organized in 1952, there was no question that the CPP controlled it. As Krobo Edusei explained to members of the Legislative Assembly:

The CPC is the product of a master brain, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, and it is the atomic bomb of the Convention People's Party. As honourable members are aware, the Prime Minister in his statements to the CPP told his party members that organization decided everything and the CPC is part of the organization of the Convention People's Party.²⁷

The purpose of the CPC, according to George Padmore, who now served as official advisor to the Prime Minister, was to "assist the Marketing Board to buy cocoa directly from the farmers instead of through the middleman brokers." According to Padmore, the CPC represented "the highest percentage of Africanization." He said that as a result of the formation of the CPC, the buying monopoly once held by the big trading firms had been smashed.²⁸

Since the cocoa middlemen, or brokers, were themselves Africans, and since the big trading firms were in no way excluded from their positions as licensed brokers of the CMB, the Cocoa Purchasing Company cannot truly be said to have represented "the highest percentage of Africanization." What the CPC did represent—as the evidence before the Jibowu Commission, later formed to investigate its activities, showed—was an attempt by CPP leaders to seek the greatest financial self-aggrandizement possible.²⁹

27. Gold Coast Legislative Assembly, *Debates*, March 3, 1954.

28. George Padmore, *The Gold Coast Revolution*, London, 1953, pp. 204-205.

29. Gold Coast, Commission of Inquiry into the Affairs of the Cocoa Purchasing Company, Ltd. (Jibowu Commission), *Report*, 1956, *passim*.

The objectives of the CPC, according to one of its own memoranda, were:

(1) . . . furthering or promoting the interests and objects of the Gold Coast Marketing Board, to purchase, store, export, sell or otherwise deal in cocoa. . . .

(2) To purchase cocoa, make advances or loans to assist persons to purchase cocoa, and to do all things necessary for and in connection with the purchase of cocoa in the Gold Coast.³⁰

The first objective of the CPC turned the CPP into a super cocoa broker. In this new role, the party entered into competition with the African cocoa brokers, many of whom had been supporters of the CPP. The political reaction of the brokers was quick and predictable. Those who had been active in the CPP quit the party or were expelled for opposing the formation of the CPC. Later, many of them became important financial backers of the opposition.

The second objective of the CPC was to put the government into large-scale loan activity.³¹ This role adversely affected the very important stratum of rich capitalist farmers who were the major source of agricultural credit in the country. The CPC had, through the CMB, a large supply of credit. By granting loans at low interest (or, as the Jibowu report showed, by granting loans to politically certified farmers without interest and without attempts to collect principal) they could bring interest rates down to a level at which the rich farmers could not afford to compete. In addition, by enabling small farmers to pay off their debts, the CPC undoubtedly antagonized some creditors who would have preferred to continue collecting interest payments.

The political effects of the CPC loan policy were more striking than they might otherwise have been because of the blatantly corrupt and partisan way in which it was administered. The CPP/CPC did not simply advance money to needy farmers. CPP organizational affiliation was required before any farmer could receive a loan. Without membership in the CPP-sponsored United Ghana Farmers' Council, farmers were not

30. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

31. Bauer, *West African Trade*, p. 262.

entitled to sell their cocoa to the CPC or to receive loans from that body. In this way, the CPP took advantage of the small farmers' financial predicament to build a patronage machine.³² Politically screened farmers not only were given instant credit, but if their loans fell into arrears, no penalties accrued. Loans were given in excess of statutory limitations.

Vote buying was channeled through the CPC. During the 1954 elections, the CPP greatly expanded the number of cash advances it made to the farmers. For the six-week period which preceded the election, advances rose over 450 percent above normal. This total amounted to £317,000.³³ "Bearing in mind," the Jibowu Report says, "that Mr. Dennis, then Loan Manager, stated in a letter to Mr. Djin [Acting Managing Director] that they depended on the farming community for votes, we are led to the inference that this excess of £317,000 over the cost of cocoa was largely used for securing votes."³⁴

Personal enrichment took place at all levels of administration of the CPC. In the highest echelons, Djin lent Nkrumah £1,800 to pay for the importation of a Cadillac.³⁵ The Commission found that

Mr. Djin's case does not, in our view, reflect any credit on the Government. . . . It has been suggested that [the Prime Minister] was indebted to Mr. Djin. This is denied, but he failed to erase from our mind the impression that he had unfortunately placed himself in such an embarrassing position in relation to Mr. Djin that he could not take or cause to be taken steps which might displease or be unpleasant to Mr. Djin.³⁶

Djin himself, according to the Jibowu Commission, "connived at irregularities committed by certain employees . . . took advantage of his position as Managing Director to reduce freight

32. Before a farmer could be considered for a loan, according to the CPP minute book, the officer dealing with the application had to be satisfied that the applicant was "a bona fide cocoa farmer and that he was a member of the UGFC." *Jibowu Report*, p. 30. Martin Appiah Danquah, General Secretary of the UGFC, also made a statement to this effect before the Jibowu Commission.

33. Jibowu Commission, *Report*, p. 41.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

35. Gold Coast Korsah Commission, *Report*, paras. 89-93.

36. Jibowu Commission, *Report*, para. 209.

charges made by the Company for transporting goods of his firm . . . managed his personal business while full-time Managing Director contrary to his agreement," and "made full use of CPC staff to sell wares of his private firm." The Commission concluded that

in view of our findings on the allegations of irregularities made against Mr. Djin, we do not consider him to have been a fit and proper person to have been in what was virtually sole control of the affairs of a quasi-public concern whose assets and those of the Loans Agency at 30th September, 1955, totalled over £6,000,000.³⁷

In addition to vote buying, speculation, and bribery, the CPC leadership also gave a good account of themselves as bureaucratic empire-builders. From a paper organization in 1952, the CPC expanded to an agency which employed, by 1956, a staff of about 700 for its produce and loan operations alone. This did not include the so-called "receivers," who were paid on a commission basis, and who numbered around 1,800. By 1956, the CPC operated 38 districts which had administrative control of 1,960 buying centers.³⁸

The forces of "good government"—the lawyers, brokers, and respectable businessmen of the UGCC—were outraged at the crude political methodology employed by the CPP. But, with only two seats in the legislature, they were in no position to launch a crusade. They were disorganized and politically impotent. The Ghana Congress Party (GCP), the new organization formed after their 1951 defeat, was only a fossilized remnant of the UGCC, once the vehicle of the entire nationalist movement. The accents of outraged and impotent virtue are audible in the statement issued at the time of the GCP's founding in May 1952:

Congress . . . will show the country the right way. It will meet the CPP squarely and defeat it. . . . We cannot sit down and allow our country to be so run and ruined by men who think of themselves only and who compromise principles without the least compunction. . . . Of course the Congress means business. We cannot allow this fooling and thieving to go on any longer or else we are all doomed. The great array of intellectual giants behind

37. *Ibid.*

38. *Ibid.*, para. 19.

the party, the response of the chiefs and farmers and the joy and support of the thinking man at the birth of Congress give evidence of the strength of the new party. This Ghana must be saved from a one-party evil, the evil of dictatorship.³⁹

The professional stratum by itself was powerless to do any more than perhaps harass the CPP. But CPP cooperation with the British policy of piling up sterling reserves through the CMB had its inevitable political backlash. Ghana's capitalist farmers became increasingly antagonized by the operations of the CMB. Their income, they soon saw, was not being "stabilized" as the British and the CPP claimed; it was being reduced. The professional stratum now discovered a base of support for its attacks against "dictatorship"—the capitalist farmers and Ghana's traditional leaders.

39. *Daily Echo* (Accra), May 6, 1952. Cited in Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 182.

4

THE RIGHT OPPOSITION: "TRIBALISM"

The Ghana Congress Party's 1952 Manifesto, with its charges of corruption and dictatorship, seems to foreshadow the 1966 coup. Actually, the generals have used only the political *vocabulary* of the old Right Opposition. The political organizations of the Right—regional, religious, and "tribal"—have been specifically and categorically proscribed. Most probably, however, the generals imposed this ban more for reasons of administrative convenience than of political necessity. Any political growth on the part of the agro-mercantile strata which formed the Right Opposition would be like hair growing on a corpse. Ghanaian capitalism is dead.

It died from a combination of wounds inflicted by British capital and CPP politicians. These two antagonists prevented the agro-mercantile strata from making the transition from land-owners and traders to factory owners and bankers which is the *sine qua non* of national capitalism. The role played by British mercantile capital and "the City" in the destruction of Ghanaian capitalism has been partially described; the CPP's role in the process was to turn back the political counterattack of the agro-mercantile strata whose economic bases had already been thoroughly undermined.

The period of open political struggle between the CPP and the Right Opposition was 1954-1958. It began with the agro-mercantile strata—goaded into political activity by the CPP's heavy export taxes on cocoa—challenging the CPP for state control; it ended with the incarceration of their parliamentary delegates and the exile of K. A. Busia, their party chairman. In early 1954, the CPP found itself without any serious organized opposition. By 1958, the struggle with the Right Opposition had transformed the CPP and the Ghanaian state apparatus: the latter had been absorbed by the former. And in the process,

Dr. Nkrumah and his colleagues found that they had no room left for the liberal residues of British rule.

Who spoke for the Right Opposition? No single voice or party, not even a single class. In the chorus of voices raised against the CPP, many accents could be detected. There was the Ashanti chief, typically a landlord or capitalist farmer, whose social philosophy and political program found a close analogy in the seventeenth century *Frondeurs*; there was the Kumasi businessman who articulated the political philosophy of John Locke, but whose desired economic instrumentalities were those of the Gosplan; there were the desperate voices of the jobless, homeless "Tokyo Joes" of Accra, who were still sleeping on the verandahs of the rich and whose accents were those of the city lumpenproletariat everywhere; there were the separatist demands of the Ewe cocoa farmer of Trans-Volta Togoland. This Gold Coast Ewe, if he could unite with his brother Ewes in French Togoland, could reunify the entire Ewe nation, and triple his income at the same time.

With such a heterogeneous movement, it is understandable that no ideological unity was achieved and that the cry of protest was the only one uttered in perfect harmony. Neither of the forces which might have polarized and deepened the political struggle (the Ghanaian working class¹ and the British owning class) was an open participant. The political organizations formed by the Right factions reflected the absence of the two decisive forces. Each opposition tendency formed its own party with its own leaders and program. They merged to form the "United Party" only when, in November 1957, the CPP itself imposed unity by making "tribal," religious, and regional parties illegal. The various tendencies, tacitly accepting the government's definition of themselves, finally joined forces. But it was a unity imposed from without rather than a unity which resulted from recognition of the necessity to carry on opposition at a higher level of discipline.

As late as 1954 the CPP position appeared very strong. There was nothing to suggest the political turmoil of succeeding years. Nkrumah was maintaining the "not unfruitful partner-

1. Agricultural as well as urban proletarians.

ship" with the colonial Governor; cocoa prices had reached record highs; and in June the party received a mandate at the polls. In the Legislative Assembly elections, the CPP won 78 out of 104 seats, with 60 percent of those registered to vote casting ballots. The remaining 32 seats were won by independent and local candidates. The Ghana Congress Party—the party of the commercial and professional strata—won only one seat. It appeared to most observers that the CPP would be able to strengthen further its "political kingdom" without any serious challenge, and that Britain would grant independence within a few months. The formation of the National Liberation Movement in Kumasi in September, 1954, therefore came as a complete surprise to everyone.

The NLM, which became the most powerful element within the opposition, was formed as a direct result of the CPP's August decision to freeze the price paid to cocoa producers at a time when world market prices were setting records. From £290 per ton in 1953, the world price had risen to over £500 per ton.² Predictably, the main backers of the NLM were cocoa farmers and chiefs who owned cocoa land. They were joined almost immediately by the Ghana Congress Party members. Description of the long-range strategy of the NLM can be reduced to one word—federalism. The cocoa farmers and traders wanted to escape the confiscatory levies on cocoa and to avoid the consequences of the government's partiality to foreign business. In a sense, Ashanti, which produced the majority of the country's cocoa, had become, like Katanga and the old Ivory Coast, the prime source of tax revenue for a larger political entity. Like these other areas, its owning classes claimed to be tired of the milch-cow role.

The other rich cocoa-producing area, the Trans-Volta Togoland region, shared the same political goal—escape from the taxing authority of the central government in Accra. The solution of its party, the Togoland Congress, was to join French Togoland, whose cocoa was being subsidized at *above* the world market price by the French government. Both movements had the same class components and shared the rhetoric of "tribal-

2. For average yearly prices, see Table 6, p. 85.

ism"; but while the NLM's goal was federation, the Togoland Congress demanded complete separation.³

Cocoa and the Togoland Question

The clearest expression of the Trans-Volta Togoland farmers' position towards price-fixing comes from a Legislative Assembly speech by M. K. Apaloo. Apaloo charged that the CPP government had decided to move against the capitalist farmers and that the government's fiscal policy aimed at getting its revenue entirely from the cocoa export tax and not from "the firms" or from loans from abroad. This policy, he argued, "places the burden of our development entirely, almost entirely, on the shoulders of our cocoa farmers." He said that the bill would deprive the farmer

of all the monies he will be entitled to, in excess of 72s. a load for his cocoa, which works out at £134 a ton, although the world price now is hovering around £500 a ton or 268s. a load. . . . Even our own native customs have a more humane system of sharing produce between the landlord and the tenant. Under the "abusa" system a tenant works on the land and the landlord takes only one third, but in our system even though the land belongs to the farmer and the government is, as it were, a trustee of the farmer, we are calling upon him to surrender two thirds of what is due him every year.⁴

Apaloo said that the government was creating a peasant slave system and that the development schemes benefited only the cities and the bureaucracy. The people in the rural areas, he said, lived "in the same old mud houses" roofed with iron sheets. What the farmers really needed was not CPC loans but higher cocoa prices:

These people want the money and instead of our giving their money to them we have taken the money and we tell them "we will give you loans." . . . I am saying: do not give them loans, give

3. A third element which arose during this period and which was included in the opposition was the Northern People's Party. The NPP was a loose alliance of chiefs which served more as a lobby for specific "welfare" projects than as a modern political party. The most important of the chiefs in this area, the Tolon Na, a firm believer in Moral Rearmament, eventually became Nkrumah's Ambassador to Nigeria.

4. Gold Coast, Legislative Assembly, *Debates*, August 12, 1955, p. 342.

them their money so that they can buy building materials for their own buildings with their own money.⁵

Kodzo Ayeke, another member of the Legislative Assembly from TVT, pointed out that while the cocoa-growing area of Trans-Volta Togoland comprised less than 5 percent of the population of Ghana, it contributed nearly 30 percent of all the cocoa revenue. He added that, after forty years of British administration as part of the Gold Coast, and after contributing millions of pounds in cocoa revenue to the CMB, "not one mile of road has been tarred" in Togoland, although there were, at that time, 4,000 miles of tarred road in the Gold Coast.⁶

While TVT politicians spoke against price-fixing, TVT farmers opposed the tax in their own way. Extensive smuggling operations were organized. While the price of cocoa was set at 72s. per load in British Togo, just across the border it sold for over 200s. per load. Smugglers on the French side were willing to pay as much as 120s. per load, and a single truckload successfully negotiating the mandate line could bring a gross profit of £400-500. It should not be surprising that the TVT farmers' party, the Togoland Congress, had only one real plank in its platform—unification with French Togoland.

Naturally, the CPP did not suggest in its propaganda that increased revenue was the reason for keeping the Ewe of TVT in Ghana. Instead, they argued that they were true Ewe nationalists. The aims of the Togoland Congress could be achieved, they said, by remaining in Ghana: with independence from Great Britain achieved, the first stage in the struggle to "liberate" French Togoland would have been completed. Later, French Togoland could be united with Ghana. This was the way to bring unity to the divided Ewe nation.⁷

This playing on the theme of unity versus "tribalism" is characteristic of the way CPP politicians dealt with the various elements within the Right opposition. "Unity" was good and "tribalism" bad. Support for the CPP and its aims meant support for "unity"; opposition to CPP aims meant support for

5. *Ibid.*

6. Gold Coast, Legislative Assembly, *Debates*, March 1, 1955.

7. Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 192.

"tribalism"—which became a criminal offense under the "Avoidance of Discrimination Bill" of November 1957.

"Tribe-baiting" in Ghana, like "red-baiting" in the United States, became an effective mode of discrediting diverse forms of opposition. Both "red-baiting" and "tribe-baiting" exploit the same fears: that the "communist" or "tribalist" *claims* to stand for certain principles, but "in reality" owes allegiance to some foreign entity. The communist, it is argued, will use his position as union leader, not to fight for the working class, but to advance the aims of the "international communist conspiracy" or of "Russia"; the "tribalist" politician, if given a national position of trust, will not carry out the program he argued for, but will use his office to benefit his own lineage, family, or tribe. Once the definition of "tribalist" as someone who only "seems" to be interested in national welfare (just as the communist only "seems" to be interested in fighting for the working class) was accepted, it became possible to proscribe any political party or individual.

The Founding of the NLM

Besides the Ewe, in Trans-Volta Togoland, the other source of "tribal" opposition was beginning to gather strength in Ashanti. On September 19, 1954, the National Liberation Movement held its first meeting in Kumasi. It was a foreshadowing of the contradictory tendencies within the movement that the first meeting was held "amidst the beating of drums, the firing of muskets, the singing of Ashanti war songs, and loud cries of *Mate me ho!*" and that the scene of all this ethnicity should be a place called Prince of Wales Park.⁸

Bafour Osie Akoto, a wealthy cocoa farmer⁹ and the Asantehene's senior linguist,¹⁰ was elected chairman; a ritual sheep was slaughtered. At the same time, party membership cards

8. Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 262.

9. According to Austin, Bafour Akoto employed some two dozen laborers on his cocoa farms, which produced between 500 and 700 loads of cocoa per year. *Politics in Ghana*, p. 261.

10. "Linguist" is misleading, although it is the usual English translation. More accurately, an *okyeame* is the chief's spokesman. The Asantehene is the paramount chief of the Ashanti nation.

were sold, on which was printed the motto of the NLM—"good government." This mixture of middle-class uplift with the symbols of traditional Ashanti authority was an accurate reflection of the class composition of the NLM leadership and its ideological requirements: the inherently contradictory plea for both mass support and respect for the privileges of the Ashanti land-owning classes, whose members were typically chiefs or chiefs' relatives.¹¹

It would have been politically impossible to organize a popular movement whose announced objective was simply to enable the absentee landlord chiefs of Ashanti to regain from the CPP the profits that had originally come from the labor of the agricultural proletariat. An "ideological" approach was necessary. The NLM said that the policies of the Cocoa Marketing Board and the Cocoa Purchasing Company were not its main targets: "The cocoa issue is only a facet of a larger problem." Instead, the NLM was appealing to the Asanteman Council "for help in the campaign against the larger issue, namely the stamping out of dictatorship and communistic practices. . . ."¹²

This attempt to red-bait the CPP served as part of the counterattack against the CPP's "tribe-baiting." The NLM tried hard to popularize anti-communism. The *Ashanti Pioneer* carried a comic strip called "Animal Farm" which was designed to make vivid the alleged horrors of "communist" society through pictorial dramatization of the Orwell fable. At rallies, the dangers of communism were described in great detail, while evidence of its imminent approach was cited. NLM spokesman Joe Appiah, for instance, said at a rally beside Lake Bosumtwé, an Ashanti shrine, that the erection of a statue of Nkrumah in front of the Accra post office was evidence of "what happened in some of the Iron Curtain countries. . . ." "We know these things," he went on, "because many of us in the opposition have been fortunate to travel around Europe and that is why we can discern Communism as soon as we see the slightest evidence of it."¹³

11. See below, pp. 64-65.

12. NLM memorandum, October 19, 1954. Cited in Austin, *Politics*, p. 264.

13. *Daily Graphic*, June 11, 1957.

The NLM and the People

A permanent wish for identification with the bourgeois representatives of the mother country is to be found among the native intellectuals and merchants.

—Frantz Fanon

In order to gain support from the Ashanti peasants, the NLM used traditional Ashanti symbols as well as an anti-communist campaign. But the NLM considered itself above "party politics." It never made serious attempts to organize at the grass-roots level. Despite passing out membership cards and using popular symbols of Ashanti national tradition, its leaders constantly emphasized their aversion to party organization. They took the position that it was the patriotic duty of every Ashanti to support the party.¹⁴

Many leaders of the NLM actually distrusted and hated the Ghanaian masses. Cobina Kessie, for instance, felt that the people must be firmly held in check by tradition and authority:

When the masses act on their own, they do so only in one way, for they have no other: they lynch. It is not altogether by chance that Mr. Nkrumah himself preached "direct action" or "positive action" against a previous government. For lynch law comes from America, the paradise of the masses, and Nkrumah was educated in America.¹⁵

An interview that Richard Wright had with Dr. Danquah further illustrates the elitist attitude which permeated the NLM:

Wright: Do you think [Nkrumah will] keep power for long?

Danquah: Yes, until the illiterate masses wake up.

Wright: Why don't you try to win the masses to your side?

Danquah: Masses? I don't like this thing of masses. There are only individuals for me.

Wright: But masses form the basis of political power in the modern world today.

Danquah: You believe that? I know you fellows dote on this thing of the masses. . . . I've read that you claim that this mass unrest comes from the industrialization of the Western world.

14. *Ashanti Pioneer*, January 24, 1955.

15. *Ashanti Pioneer*, January 26, 1955. Kessie was later the Ghanaian government's ambassador to the People's Republic of China.

Wright: Why is it that you cannot appeal to the masses on the basis of their daily needs? You're a lawyer; you're used to *representing*. . . . Well, represent them. As we say in America: be a mouthpiece for them.

Danquah: I can't do things like that.

Wright: It's the only road to power in modern society. No matter how deeply you reject it, it's true.

Danquah: It's emotion.¹⁶

Wright concluded, "He was shaking his head. . . . It was no use. He was of the old school. One did not speak *for* the masses; one told them what to do."¹⁷

By tradition, class position, and personal inclination, the NLM leadership seemed unable to ally itself with Ghana's working class. These inclinations were probably correct from the *standpoint of long-term political survival*. Any attempt to democratize the movement by going to the masses would have required giving them something to fight for, and it is quite possible that, once stirred politically, the landless workers would have wanted to fight against the semi-feudal land relations which were their most immediate source of oppression.

Cut off from the masses, the NLM had its only solid strength among the capitalist farmers (including the chiefs) and in business and commercial circles. This provided insufficient political leverage to overthrow Nkrumah. Support was required from somewhere else. Where could it be obtained?

The NLM and the British

The NLM's strategy was to win federal powers by appealing to British imperial proclivities. The road to a federal assembly in Kumasi would have to pass through the London Colonial Office. But the NLM recognized that Nkrumah was able to count on British support. As John Tsiboe, editor of the *Ashanti Pioneer*, said: "The British are . . . using the CPP in the same manner that they once used the chiefs. The present government is for British interests; it's the same situation with

16. Wright, *Black Power*, p. 221.

17. *Ibid.* One of the first acts of the National Liberation Council was to hold a memorial service for Danquah, who died while held in preventive detention.

the chiefs in reverse.”¹⁸ Consequently, British power had to be neutralized.

Nevertheless, the NLM really had very little to offer the British. In fact, if the proposed Ashanti Federal Assembly were to lift the export tax on cocoa, it would stop the flow of dollars and pounds which were used to stave off the always imminent collapse of the pound. And as far as Ghana was concerned, it was this flow that concerned the British above all else. The NLM leaders were conscious of this. As K. A. Busia, the leader of the Parliamentary Opposition, told Sir Charles Arden-Clarke: “The British here care nothing for our people; they are concerned with their political power which enables them to defend their financial interests. They sided with the CPP in order to protect those interests. It’s that simple.”¹⁹

As they were not able to make substantive concessions to the British, the leaders of the NLM were forced to make superficial appeals to British power and susceptibilities. They sought to retain “God Save the Queen” as the national anthem; they tried to have Queen Elizabeth’s head placed on the national currency; they loudly deplored the ouster of “the Queen’s representative in Ghana,” the Governor-General, from Christianborg Castle in Nkrumah’s favor; they protested that Queen Elizabeth’s head rightfully belonged on the new postage stamps instead of Nkrumah’s; and they consistently accused opponents of these measures of fomenting “sedition and treason against Her Majesty the Queen.”²⁰ The willingness of the NLM to offer Great Britain the shadow and not the substance of power was to have its counterpart in British willingness to see that the NLM received only paper guarantees of federal power.

The NLM and "Tribalism"

Oxford has made me what I am today. I have had eleven years contact with it and now consider it my second home. Most of my friends are here.

—K. A. Busia, 1950

18. Wright, *Black Power*, p. 275.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 229.

20. *The Times* (London), June 11, 1957.

"The name of the Asantehene," the Golden Stool, Ashanti interests, Ashanti history, and Ashanti rights formed the stock of the symbols and slogans by which the NLM sought to win mass support. At more advanced ideological levels, the NLM separatist demands became pleas for pluralistic democracy. They included arguments that might have been advanced by a Madisonian structure-functionalist:

The peoples of these territories, belonging as they do to different tribes, have different structures of society, and are at different stages of adaptation and adoption of Western culture. . . . There is not enough consciousness of national identity to make possible easy and at the same time democratic unitary government. In the absence of this consciousness, the safest course is to ensure that not all the powers of government are concentrated at the center but that a substantial part of them is retained in the component territories where people have learnt the habits and attitudes of living together for some time.²¹

There is in this statement a kind of sophisticated, self-conscious "tribalism" that would be impossible for truly traditionally oriented people to maintain. The NLM "tribalism" owed more to Margery Perham and to Radcliffe-Brown than to the Mau-Mau rebellion.

Despite these self-conscious attempts on the part of the NLM to be "tribal," many of its leaders, like K. A. Busia,²² actually despised tribal life, as this interview between Busia and Richard Wright shows:

Wright: What is the significance of the oath-taking and libation pouring at the CPP's rallies?

Busia: It's to bind the masses to the party. . . . Tribal life is religious through and through. An oath is a great thing to an African. An oath links him with the past, allies him with his ancestors. That's the deepest form of loyalty that the tribal man knows. The libation pouring means the same thing. Now, these things, when employed at a political meeting, insure with rough authority, that the masses will follow and accept leadership. That

21. "Preamble of Proposals for a Federal Constitution for an Independent Gold Coast and Togoland by Movements and Parties other than the Convention People's Party," Kumasi, n.d. Cited in Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 277.

22. Busia was related to the important stool at Wenchi.

is what so-called mass parties need. . . . The leaders of the CPP use tribal methods to enforce their ends.

Wright: I take it that *you* wouldn't use such methods?

Busia: "I'm a Westerner," he said, sucking in his breath, "I was educated in the West."²³

Wright remarked of the interview, "I had the feeling that he was speaking sincerely, that he could not conceivably touch such methods, that he regarded them with loathing, and that he did not even relish thinking that anybody else would."²⁴

Nevertheless, while for many NLM intellectual leaders the tribal values of their people were of no personal significance, they were able to cooperate with the Asantehene (the Paramount Chief of the Ashanti nation) and with other "traditional" leaders. In order to understand the basis for this cooperation, it is necessary to understand the functions of the chieftaincy and its socio-economic basis in rapidly changing Ghanaian society.

The NLM and the Chiefs

The modern chief, in addition to his traditional roles, is often both landowner and trader. Important chiefs may have several hundred *abusa* laborers working for them and be land developers and commercial investors as well. The Asantehene himself demonstrates this tendency to acquire non-traditional sources of power through a combination of feudal and capitalistic devices. On one hand, he was the biggest landowner in Ashanti; on the other, he was a major stockholder in the Kumasi Race Track Club. Through the Asantehene's Land Department, he invested in new housing developments and carried out town-and-country planning and investment. The whole process of uneven socio-economic development in Ghana and the part played by the chief in this process are symbolized by a photograph in the *Daily Graphic* of June 26, 1957. It shows the Asantehene, wearing his traditional robes and ceremonial slippers, and holding a golden key "weighing twelve ounces." With his golden key, he is unlocking the new £60,000 Kumasi branch of Barclays' Bank.

23. Wright, *Black Power*, p. 228.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 228.

The Asantehene's great wealth and the scope of his business interests reflect the changing class position of the Ashanti capitalist farmer-chiefs as a whole. More Anglican than Akan, they were no longer leaders of a religio-military hierarchy, but leading citizens and employers in rural capitalist communities. It was precisely their *lack* of traditional orientation that made it possible for an Oxford-trained sociologist like Busia to form a political alliance with them. Had the chiefs maintained their traditional roles, Busia might have studied them, but he would never have served as head of their parliamentary party.

Because of the chiefs' changing roles, it was possible for them to gain political allies among the intellectuals. But how were they able to gain the support of the "commoner" businessmen as well?

5

THE RIGHT OPPOSITION: BUSINESSMEN

The national consciousness of the Ghanaian commercial-professional strata before the postwar independence movement was shaped by two primary factors. The first was their symbiotic relationship with the British colonial government: successively, the commercial-professional strata conceived of themselves as political and cultural mediators between the British and their own traditional rulers; as competitors with the traditional rulers for British favor; and as heirs-apparent to British colonial rule. Insofar as members of the commercial-professional strata accepted these roles, they fitted the Fanonist model of national bourgeois consciousness: "Seen through its eyes, its mission has nothing to do with transforming the nation; it consists prosaically of being the transmission line between the nation . . . and neo-colonialism."¹

Those who rejected the role of mediators tended to develop a self-conscious neo-traditionalism with anti-colonial overtones. One of the first written reflections of this form of national consciousness is the work of Attoh Ahuma who hoped in 1911 for "an era of Backward Movement" among all cultured West Africans. He maintained that "Intelligent Retrogression is the only Progression which will save our beloved country," and urged the need "to rid ourselves of foreign accretions and excrescences" as an indispensable condition of "National Resurrection and National Prosperity."²

The national consciousness of the commercial-professional strata was generally a mixture of these conflicting symbiotic and neo-traditional tendencies. Dr. Danquah was perhaps the most articulate example of this typically bifurcated consciousness,

1. *Wretched of the Earth*, p. 124.

2. Cited in David Kimble, *A Political History of Ghana, 1850-1928*, Oxford, 1963, pp. 499-501.

which in his case embraced traditional Akan religion, chieftaincy, Anglophilia, and anti-colonialism.

The second factor shaping the national consciousness of the commercial-professional strata was the struggle with the British import-export oligopoly. Thirteen British firms, led by the United Africa Company (a subsidiary of Unilever and the world's largest trading company) controlled prices, import licenses, and wholesale credit. Only the economic activity that seemed too arduous or too small to be worthwhile for the larger concerns became a source of unrestricted opportunity for the Ghanaian trader.³ Because the British cocoa magnate, William Cadbury, found it more profitable to wait at the port to collect the accumulated cocoa harvest, there was an opportunity for Ghanaian middlemen to penetrate the rural hinterland, finance the landowners, organize transportation, and collect the produce.

But the African middlemen were often dependent on the big British firms for capital, and the firms were their chief customers. In the 1930's, the middlemen had attempted to bypass the British trading firms by selling cocoa directly to agents in Europe and the United States. These attempts were largely unsuccessful. Consequently the African trader was torn between opposition to British oligopolistic control and the need to maintain his source of capital and his trading outlets. Contradictory economic pressures thus reinforced the division already present in the national consciousness between anti-colonialism and accommodation, neo-traditionalism and all-out assimilation.

The professional stratum formed the elite *par excellence* of Gold Coast society. Numerically insignificant—in 1948 there were only 57 lawyers and 47 doctors in the Gold Coast⁴—the professional stratum dominated every nationalist and proto-nationalist organization from the Aborigines Rights Protection Society (1897) to the UGCC. Members of the professional stratum typically sprang from the wealthiest of the coastal

3. The Ghanaian traders were also forced to compete with the usually better-financed Levantine traders, who formed an intermediate commercial stratum between the British and the Africans. As a result of their greater visibility, the Levantines often absorbed much of the antagonism which would ordinarily have been directed at British enterprise.

4. Gail Margaret Kelly, *The Ghanaian Intelligentsia*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1959, p. 57.

merchant families; their wealth combined with their foreign education enabled them to occupy the highest positions open to Africans in Gold Coast society. The nationalist movement of CPP youngmen threatened this position, but it was inconceivable to the professionals that the British would ever turn the Gold Coast over to those whom they liked to describe as "the hooligans."

In 1951, however, when Arden-Clarke performed his famous "act of grace," the political expectations of the African commercial-professional strata were dissipated. They no longer had any position to protect as colonial heirs-apparent. They now developed feelings of bitterness and betrayal which found their most unambiguous reflection in the accusations Busia directed against Governor Arden-Clarke.⁵ While some members of the commercial-professional strata still clung to the vain hope that the British would help their party work out federal and separatist compromises with the Nkrumah government, others began to attack British colonialism openly for the first time.

Between 1954 and 1958, the commercial-professional strata found themselves in the unaccustomed position of defending the national interest against Anglo-American business. They were antagonized especially by the way the CPP served as broker for these foreign interests. They demanded that the government bring the British banks in Ghana under the control of the central banking system; they opposed Nkrumah's policy of allowing United States control over the Volta power complex; they fought for increased outlays for industrial development projects; they ridiculed the "colonialist mentality" which produced annual budget surpluses despite increased national revenues.⁶ In making these nationalist charges and demands, the commercial-professional strata exposed the developing neo-colonialist tendencies within the CPP regime early in its history. Neither the CPP nor the commercial-professional strata within the United Party were capable of the great national tasks of the democratic revolution: industrialization, elimination of

5. See p. 62 above.

6. Budgetary surpluses prevailed until 1954-55. In that year the surplus amounted to approximately 10 percent of the Gross Domestic Product.

foreign financial control, and elimination of semi-feudalism. But the commercial-professional strata at least had the brief opportunity to act the role of "conscience of the Republic"—before Nkrumah shoved them off the national stage.

Banks, Credit, and African Business

Ghanaian businessmen, whether building contractors, timber merchants, cocoa buyers, or small manufacturers, all faced the same problem—inadequate credit facilities. The timber merchants complained that they lost out to foreign competition because they were unable to get loans to buy timber-cutting equipment; the building contractors charged that lack of capital prevented them from hiring enough labor to bid on big government projects; small manufacturers claimed that insufficient credit prevented them from expanding their operations. A parliamentary spokesman for the National Liberation Movement analyzed the situation this way:

We all know that foreign traders are dominating the commercial field in this country, and are gradually displacing African traders because the financial position of the African traders is weak. In the timber industry, for instance, Syrian, Lebanese, and other commercial firms have been able to come together and have succeeded in raising loans from the foreign commercial banks with which to start business operations as their working capital. On the contrary, even though small African traders may come together for the purpose of trading, they usually do not succeed in getting credit facilities from the foreign commercial banks.⁷

Why couldn't the Ghanaian businessmen get credit? There were actually several reasons. First, the Cocoa Marketing Board was draining Ghana of its capital.⁸ Second, the United Africa Company, the largest single source of credit in Ghana (and in British West Africa as a whole), had no interest in financing potential competitors. Along with the twelve other import-export firms operating in Ghana, the UAC advanced money to buyers

7. Gold Coast, Legislative Assembly, *Debates*, February 14, 1957.

8. The authoritative work on African colonial banking states: "It is probable that the policies of the Marketing Boards in accumulating large stabilization funds have further reduced the finance available to Africans." W. T. Newlyn and D. C. Rowan, *Money and Banking in British Colonial Africa*, Oxford, 1954, p. 217.

during the crop seasons and advanced goods to retailers. But this credit was given only to Ghanaians operating on the lower trading echelons. The system made it practically impossible for a Ghanaian to become an important cocoa broker, i.e., an agent of the marketing board, or to enter into the wholesale import trade.⁹

The third reason was perhaps the most critical. The banks, the source from which one would ordinarily expect credit to come, were completely closed to Ghanaians. There were only two important banks in Ghana at the time of independence: the Bank of British West Africa and Barclays' Bank DCO.¹⁰ Both gave numerous reasons for not lending to Africans. They claimed that the complexity of African family relationships and land tenure made it impossible to trust even an apparently prosperous African. Moreover, they preferred, they said, to deal with customers who passed all their transactions through their bank accounts. With Africans, the bankers maintained, it was impossible to know with any certainty just what their actual financial position was: these complications did not arise with Europeans or Levantines.¹¹

The basis for the refusal to lend lay deeper than discrimination: the banks were not really in Ghana to lend money. Their main source of income came from banking services, e.g., transferring money, discounting bills, and drafts. The charges by British banks for banking services in West Africa are thought to be the highest in the Commonwealth.¹² Their lending activities were minor. Since they refused to lend to Africans and weren't able to lend to the big import-export firms, which had their own sources of capital, their loan activity was confined to small import-export firms. This meant that the banks had considerable surplus funds which were sent to London and put to work there.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 139.

10. Barclays' Bank DCO is a subsidiary of the British Barclays' Bank Ltd. The shareholders of the Bank of West Africa include the other major British commercial banks—Lloyds, Westminster, the National Provincial, and the Midlands. In 1963, the Bank of British West Africa had 115 branches, of which 41 were in Ghana. Barclays' Bank DCO had 1,364, of which only 60 were in Ghana.

11. P. T. Bauer, *West African Trade*, p. 183.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 181.

This was another instance of how the British operating in Ghana were able to institutionalize capital export back to the "mother" country.

The British banks were able to do this even after independence, for Ghana did not have a real central bank or her own currency authority. The Ghanaian pound was really still just the British pound printed on different colored paper. The British banks could take Ghanaian pounds out of the country and change them into British pounds with impunity. This loss of money deflated the economy and compounded the difficulties facing the African businessman.¹³

With the foreign banks acting like gilded vacuum cleaners, sucking up local capital without any feedback in the form of loans, it is understandable that the commercial-professional strata would press for regulatory legislation. This they did when the 1957 Central Bank bill was under consideration in the Legislative Assembly. They argued that, unless foreign banks were brought under firm control, there would be no justification for having a central bank—except for national pride. "If we are going to have a Central Bank," one Opposition Member said, "we must have a Central Bank with 'teeth' and not a Central Bank which is only a channel for controlling the financial assets of this country by a foreign power."¹⁴

The Opposition demanded further that Ghana's banking legislation contain a provision enabling it to break parity with the pound sterling. This was especially important in case the British pound had to be devalued, as had happened in 1949. As long as parity remained, devaluation of the British pound would automatically lower the value of the Ghanaian pound.

The official CPP attitude to the Opposition proposals, and to all other proposals which involved greater fiscal and monetary independence from Great Britain, the pound sterling, and the foreign banks, is revealed in the following highly significant exchange between Joe Appiah, an NLM floor leader, and the Minister of Finance, K. A. Gbedemah:

13. See Tony Killick, "The Monetary and Financial System," in *A Study of Contemporary Ghana* (especially pp. 312-326) for a discussion of the operations of the Ghanaian banking system.

14. Gold Coast, Legislative Assembly, *Debates*, February 5, 1957.

Gbedemah: It may be that some future Government of Ghana will wish to break away . . . [from the pound] to set forth on uncharted and unpredictable financial seas.

Appiah: Is the honourable Minister afraid that honesty and integrity will have to be imported in?

Gbedemah: But this present Government will not expose the new ship of State to such hazards. That is why we introduce Clause 18 as a vital provision in this Bill—"The parity of the Ghana pound shall be one Ghana pound to one pound sterling"—(Inter-ruption) Honorable Members opposite are making rude political jokes which do not disturb me. We shall maintain the parity of the Ghana pound to the pound sterling. That is our anchor of safety.¹⁵

The same measures which tied the CPP government to the pound sterling, provided its "anchor of safety," and kept it from "uncharted and unpredictable financial seas" served to destroy the Ghanaian businessman. All that could possibly save him was a steady increase in the availability of credit. But this would have involved a restructuring of Ghana's fiscal and monetary system, which was, at this time, completely inadmissible to the CPP. The CPP's anchor of safety had become the African businessman's millstone.¹⁶

The CPP Response

Within the Legislative Assembly, the commercial-professional strata were in their chosen political arena. Generally better educated and more polished, their representatives were consistently able to embarrass the CPP by exposing concessions made to the requirements of the Sterling Area. Outside the Legislative Assembly, however, they were on less sure ground. Their party had no more to offer the urban working class than the CPP; and in the rural areas, because of their alliance with the chiefs and capitalist farmers, the NLM represented essen-

15. *Ibid.*

16. Later, in the 1960's, the Ghanaian government's banking system began a tremendous expansion of its lending activities—not, however, to African businessmen, but to the government itself. In 1961, the banks owed £157,000 to the government. By the end of June 1963, the government was a net debtor to the banking system to the tune of £33 million. Bank of Ghana, *Annual Report* 1962-63, Table XLIII.

tially what the landlord means to any tenant. The NLM consequently attempted to fight for their federal cause at the higher diplomatic levels: they preferred to use the formal mechanisms of appeal and quiet negotiations rather than mass rallies and popular demonstrations.

How did the CPP try to cope with these tactics? One would suppose that the leaders of the 1950 Positive Action campaign would have welcomed an open popular contest with an elitist party like the NLM. But this was not the case. As early as 1956, it could be seen that the CPP had become skeptical of its popular appeal. The tactics used in the struggle with the Right Opposition provide an opportunity to determine the strength of the CPP and its relations to the Ghanaian masses.

The most obvious change from the 1950 Positive Action days was that the CPP no longer behaved like a mass political party. Instead it combined a preference for "summit" conferences with the style of a United States political machine. The CPP did not work through the trade unions or involve the masses in its battles in any way; it did not attack the elitist NLM from a class point of view. Rather than organization, agitation, and political education aimed at generating power from below, the CPP preferred or felt forced to try to exert influence from the top down by negotiation. And when negotiation failed, it resorted to administrative repression. The CPP's behavior during and after the third and last general election in 1956 illustrates its increasing isolation from its popular base.

In mid-1955, the Togoland Congress and the NLM were gaining momentum, especially among the capitalist farmers in their regions. In a July by-election, in Ashanti, the NLM candidate won 70 percent of the vote. The CPP response was not to "parachute" organizers into the rural areas to organize the landless agricultural workers, who would have been natural allies in any fight against the capitalist farmers and rentier chiefs. Instead, Nkrumah tried to negotiate the differences through a series of conferences with NLM leaders.

When both the NLM and the TC insisted that their demands were "non-negotiable," Nkrumah turned to the British. He requested that the Colonial Secretary of State appoint a "Constitutional Advisor" to study the problem of "devolu-

tion." Sir Frederick Bourne drafted a report which favored CPP "centralism" as opposed to NLM "federalism." The British, at this time, would tolerate no plan for federation that allowed Ghanaian cocoa revenue to be diverted from its normal British channels. Instead of federation, the Bourne Report offered dissident elements another chance at the ballot box.

The CPP violently opposed this feature of the report. According to Nkrumah, the "members of my party executive were almost unanimous in voting against a general election and even to mention the subject was like waving a red flag before a bull."¹⁷ Nor was an election favored by the NLM. Several months of negotiations between the political parties dragged on until the British government finally forced the issue: the Colonial Secretary ordered that an election take place in July 1956.

In view of the close cooperation between the CPP and the colonial government, together with the CPP's desire to avoid an election, what made the British finally insist on a vote? Their advocacy of an election appears to conflict with their stand against the NLM's federalism. Why did they give the NLM any chance at all?

First, the British were anxious to head off any action that might lead to Ashanti's secession from the Gold Coast. Ashanti's cocoa wealth provided both revenue for the Gold Coast government and sterling balances for Britain. It was the "Katanga" of Ghana; it could not be allowed to fall into the hands of its capitalist cocoa farmers.¹⁸ By forcing the NLM into an election which it would very likely lose, the British could indirectly dispose of the federal plan and at the same time reduce the chance that the constitutionalist NLM would attempt to secede.

Second, if the NLM were to pull an upset and win the plebiscite, the British had effectively hedged their bets. The Secretary of State for Colonies intimated that "the British Government would hesitate to grant independence to the Gold Coast until a *substantial majority* of the people had . . . agreed upon a workable constitution for the country."¹⁹ (Emphasis

17. *Ghana*, p. 244.

18. The *Report of the Constitutional Adviser* stated that the NLM proposal would "slow down development and introduce an intolerable handicap to the administration of the country."

19. Kwame Nkrumah, *Ghana*, p. 245.

added.) The British of course would determine what a "substantial majority" was. In other words, if the NLM lost, that meant the end of the federal plan; if it won, the British could always claim that the "substantial majority" had not been achieved.

This was apparently the conclusion drawn by the NLM leadership also. Early in the campaign, they felt that even if they won the election, the British might not let them form a government. Dr. Busia wrote an open letter to Governor Arden-Clarke reminding him that in accordance "with constitutional practice in the United Kingdom, the National Liberation Movement and its allies will expect Your Excellency to call upon Dr. K. A. Busia, their Parliamentary Leader, to form a Government should they (together with the independents supporting them) win more than 52 seats at the election."²⁰

The final results of the election justified the skepticism both parties had entertained about their mass appeal. Although the CPP won 55 percent of the votes cast, this represented only 32 percent of the registered electorate and only 16.5 percent of the eligible electorate. In other words, on the eve of independence, only one out of six Ghanaians eligible to vote supported the CPP.²¹

To carry the municipalities, the CPP relied on Nkrumah's personality, pan-Africanist sentiments, and gratitude for previous welfare benefits. A leaflet used in Accra and published in the party paper three days before the election shows this approach. Here are some of its points:

Why You Should Vote for Nkrumah

- (1) Because Nkrumah is a man of the Common People. . . .
- (3) Because Nkrumah is honest, straightforward, hardworking, vigilant, stainless. . . .

20. *Daily Graphic*, July 15, 1956. (Cited by Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 319). That the British do not feel bound to act "in accordance with constitutional practice in the United Kingdom" in the case of parties which are unacceptable to them, has been demonstrated again in the 1965 elections in British Guiana. The leading party in the election, the Progressive People's Party, was not permitted to form a government.

21. Harold S. Jacobs, *The Myth of the Missing Opposition: Ghana, A Case Study*, unpublished manuscript, University of California, 1965, p. 20.

- (8) Because through Nkrumah's instrumentality Africanisation, free education have been encouraged, building of hospitals, clinics, roads, bridges, harbours, Achiasi-Kotoku railway, the formation of IDC, ADC, CPC, Bank of the Gold Coast, the Volta Project, Tema Development Corporation and many others. . . .
- (9) Because . . . on June 12th, 1949, the CPP was conceived and born and Nkrumah chosen by us to lead us for independence.
- (10) Because it was Nkrumah who asked the youth of Ghana . . . to make the Gold Coast a paradise so that when the gates of Heaven are opened by Peter we shall sit in heaven and see our children driving their aeroplanes, commanding their own armies.
- (11) Because in Africa today the sun is rising not in East but in West all through Kwame Nkrumah.
- (12) Because Nkrumah is talked about with surprise in Johannesburg, in Nairobi, Uganda, Alabama. . . .
- (13) Because if Nkrumah fails, a great hope will die in Africa. . . .²²

In the countryside, the main tactic used by the party was exploitation of rivalries between chiefdoms, lineages, and localities. The CPP, which liked to talk about its opposition to "tribalism" and "tribal reactionaries," and its allegiance to "unity," nevertheless concluded an alliance with a group of dissident Brong chiefs in Ashanti. The Brongs, the largest cocoa land-owners in Ghana, agreed to give the CPP electoral support and were in turn rewarded with the creation of a separate Brong state (presently the Brong-Ahafo region) carved out of Ashanti territory.

The following extract from the journal of two CPP party workers campaigning in the villages of the Northern Territories vividly illustrates the CPP's methods:

We made it an issue that it was a fight between the Chianas and the Pagas. We will not like the Chianas to be paramount over us. We would have to walk to Chiana for court cases and pay our levies to them; we made it known that if we allowed the Chianas to win, that means Chianapio [the chief] would be paramount and would dictate to our chief in Paga.

22. *Evening News*, July 13, 1956, cited in Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 334.

Owing to this news the whole of Paga went haywire. Enthusiastic representatives from all sections volunteered to help Paga win the election so that we might not become servants to the Chianas but masters of our own.²³

In addition to battenning on the numerous local and tribal disputes which beset Ghanaian society, the CPP was not averse to American-style "pork-barrel" campaigning. The party would often hold out to a local council the promise of a generous development grant or threaten its withdrawal.²⁴ In rural areas the CPP campaigners worked primarily through the chiefs or their emissaries. Outright bribes played a major role:

We slept in the town for two days and at night called on the Headman and explained what [the CPP candidate] was trying to do, tipped them heavily, gave out Kola and drinks, i.e., spirits, and clothes, etc. Before leaving we left two of our men and a native who helped us a great deal, we gave them about 5 pounds each for canvassing, i.e., buy [sic] kola and tipping them, etc. We spent heavily in this constituency. The other side also spent heavily. In one case, a headman who was supporting us turned later to be our enemy. We understood the other side gave him about £40 cash as he was a popular man in this area and having many subjects under his command.²⁵

In 1949, the CPP had relied on the youngmen as the class basis of the party. But because the party was trying to form as broad a coalition as possible against British colonialism, it had not felt able to organize an attack on chieftaincy. By 1956 the CPP had regressed to the point where it no longer based itself on the youngmen in the rural areas: it simply attempted to outbribe the Opposition for the favor of the chiefs. Yet it was the power of the chiefs that had to be broken if the democratic (to say nothing of the socialist) revolution were ever to take place in Ghana.

Consolidation and Repression

Although the CPP had only won the elections by a relatively narrow margin, the stage was now set for the formal

23. Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 360.

24. See *ibid.*, p. 335, for examples.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 361.

grant of independence. Less than a month after the elections, Nkrumah introduced a resolution in the Legislative Assembly calling for independence. The CPP had won a national plebiscite and had strong British backing: the Right Opposition could do nothing but walk out. Now the NLM and its allies not only were reduced to regional support, but were forced to take the anti-nationalist position of trying to delay independence until their federal plan was adopted.

As late as November 1956, only a few months before independence, the NLM announced that it would declare a separate independence and proposed that "a partition commission to divide the assets and liabilities of the Gold Coast among its four component parts" be established.²⁶ The Opposition's demands were, of course, rejected by the Colonial Office; and its leaders shrank from organizing popular violence.²⁷ They therefore promised to set aside their plans for separate independence, and in return the CPP promised to establish the popularly elected regional bodies desired by the Opposition.

In the Trans-Volta Togoland area, the combination of "pan-Eweism," low cocoa prices, and a leadership uncommitted to the principles of non-violence produced rebellion. Two days before independence, on March 4, 1957, "disturbances" broke out. The new government moved troops and police into the area, and by March 18th more than 20 people had been killed or injured and nearly one hundred Ewes had been seized, tried, and sentenced to imprisonment. The top leaders of the Togoland Congress, MP's S. G. Antor and Kodzo Ayeke, were later arrested and convicted of organizing "the plot."

Only a few weeks later, in the capital itself, there sprang up an anti-CPP movement of the unemployed Ga workers and petty-bourgeoisie, which called itself the *Ga Shifimo Kpee* (Ga Standfast Organization). They demanded jobs, better housing, and lower food prices. Their rallies and marches, which often

26. *The Times* (London), November 21, 1956.

27. Busia, Joe Appiah, and J. B. Danquah issued a statement disavowing violence in 1957. They said: "Violence against established authority is practically unknown in the country. Except for the ugly and untraditional incident of positive action, led by Dr. Nkrumah in 1950, the country won its independence without any form of planned violence against the imperial power." *The Times* (London), November 4, 1957.

numbered in the tens of thousands, forced CPP ministers to drive their limousines down the side streets of Accra. But the really permanent effect of the GSK was to spur the passage of the Avoidance of Discrimination Bill. Henceforth, all "tribal, religious, and regional" parties were illegal.

In Ashanti, the leaders of the NLM could only bring themselves to support the *aims* of the new anti-CPP militants in Accra and Togo. The men and the methods still offended their special predilections. No organizational synthesis occurred until November 1957, and even after this date formal rather than organic unity joined the opposition forces. The Opposition in Ashanti and the Opposition in TVT continued to exist side by side, always approaching each other, yet never joined in practice.

In these circumstances, the CPP, shaken by the mass rallies in Accra and the armed revolt in Togo, but still in command of all the levers of power, began to use the state apparatus to prevent further erosion of its narrow popular base.

The following year, 1958, became the Year of Repression—relatively bloodless, but nevertheless effective. In January the newly-granted State of Emergency powers were used in Kumasi to make arrests and carry out deportations without trial; in February the NLM-dominated Kumasi State Council and the Asanteman Council were subjected to official investigation; in March Antor and Ayeke were sentenced to six years hard labor; in May the most important pro-NLM chief outside Ashanti, Nana Ofori Atta II, was destooled for "improper conduct."

In July, Dr. Nkrumah personally moved the first reading of the Preventive Detention Bill; in August, the 1957 compromise Constitution was tacitly rescinded by the reduction of the regional assemblies to advisory bodies.²⁸ In September, as a result of the February inquiries, the Kumasi and Asanteman Councils were deprived of their treasuries, and all lands and properties possessed by the Asantehene were taken from him. In November, the arrest and incarceration of 43 opposition members of the National Assembly was carried out. And in December the CPP closed out the year by making strikes illegal.

Thus by the end of 1958 not only had an important weap-

28. The Regional Assemblies were abolished in March 1959.

on of the organized working class been declared illegal, but the Ga urban movement, the cocoa farmers in Ashanti and Trans-Volta Togoland, the rentier chiefs, and the commercial strata had all been utterly defeated or disorganized. If the CPP could not achieve the power that flows from the organized allegiance of the Ghanaian people, it still controlled the administrative organs of the state. How did the CPP use them?

ECONOMICS IN THE POLITICAL KINGDOM, 1957-1961

As Charles Bettelheim has pointed out, the “poor” nations of the world are not underdeveloped: they are oppressed. Their problem is not lack of development but morbid development. This is no mere terminological quibble. It is the key to understanding the problem of economic backwardness. When a morphological study is made of the two types, it becomes clear that the industrial nation is not simply the enlarged “mature” form of the poor nation or its “logical” outgrowth:

Today’s industrialized countries are not economically dependent. The structure of their production does not correspond to that of “underdeveloped” countries in which a few hypertrophied sectors are narrowly tied to a few foreign markets, deeply penetrated by foreign capital. These economies do not develop or stagnate according to the evolution of the world market for this or that mineral or agricultural raw material. They are not forced to support the cost of heavy foreign financial obligations (interest, dividends, royalties paid to foreign capitalists). Their infant industries do not have to face the competition of powerful, already established industries dominated by the same big capital which already dominates their own natural resources. These economies do not depend for their enlarged reproduction on imports of equipment coming from abroad. Even when they were not fully industrialized, they were not deformed and disequibrated but, on the contrary, integrated and self-centered.¹

According to Bettelheim, it is incorrect to say that the poor countries have not developed. They have. But their development has been skewed by their relationship with the West.² Consequently, the problem of economic growth is not solved by

1. *Planification et croissance accélérée*, Paris, 1965, pp. 28-29.

2. Bettelheim admits that there *are* some countries that could properly be called underdeveloped, i.e., have maintained the same socio-economic structures for centuries. But these countries—Yemen and Nepal are two examples he gives—have been cut off from contact with the “developed” countries and do not present the same characteristics as the majority of oppressed nations.

evolution, i.e., by stimulating growth within the old economic structures and by intensifying the existing relationships. Growth can only be attained by the opposite means—by smashing the old structures and severing the old relationships. Only then is it possible to achieve rational, democratic, collective control over economic inputs and outputs—that is, socialist planning.

The Two Ghanas: 1957-1966

Ghana's morbid development—the hypertrophy of her foreign-dominated export sectors, the rudimentary growth of her internal productive sectors—typifies the dualism characteristic of oppressed nations. We have seen thus far that during the early years of its rule, the CPP made no effort whatsoever to restructure Ghanaian society: the leaders did not see the institutions left behind by the British colonialists as barriers to national economic development. The CPP, at this time, believed that in order to achieve rapid economic growth the institutions of colonialism needed only to be administered by Africans.

At this point one might ask: "If Nkrumah simply maintained all the old colonial institutions, what made the 'free world' attack him so bitterly? Why did the Soviet Union consistently single him out for special praise? How did Ghana become known as a center of African socialism?" The answer is that there was not one Ghana, but two—a pro-Western Ghana from approximately 1957 to 1961, and a pro-socialist Ghana from 1961 to February 1966. The first Ghana operated as an ordinary neo-colony stagnating within the British sphere of influence. It looked to the British pound as its "anchor of safety," kept its external reserves in London instead of Accra, and allowed the British banks to systematically deflate the economy. Post-1961 Ghana attempted to adopt socialist planning techniques, tried to build up the state industrial sector, and finally brought the British banks under some measure of control.

Pre-1961 Ghana had been guided by a development strategy formulated by W. Arthur Lewis.³ This strategy, which empha-

3. W. Arthur Lewis is an eminent West Indian economist who has taught at Manchester University and Princeton. He is the author of the much praised book *The Theory of Economic Growth*, London, 1955. He has also written a series of articles in *Encounter* magazine about politics in West Africa.

ized total dependence on foreign capital to industrialize the country, brought nearly complete disaster. During the "Lewis era," Ghana experienced rapid deterioration of her balance of payments position, loss of huge amounts of external reserves, and failure to attract anywhere near the amount of foreign capital which Lewis counted on to assure Ghana's industrial future.

Then during the depth of Ghana's 1961 balance of payments debacle, Nkrumah introduced the "Seven Year Plan for Work and Happiness." This plan forms a real watershed in post-independence Ghanaian history. The plan declared socialism to be the national objective and sought to achieve self-sustaining industrial growth by 1967. Contrary to the Lewis strategy, the state was to have the major role in economic development.

Historical accuracy is not the only reason for emphasizing the existence of two stages of Ghanaian history and attempting to describe how one stage led to the next. There are also important political reasons. By telescoping Ghanaian history into one horrendous "socialistic-communistic dictatorship," the NATO intellectuals are able to ignore the neo-colonial background from which Ghana tried to escape; they are not required to defend the embarrassing Lewis period. This period provides an obvious case study of how the most "affluent" of the oppressed nations carefully followed the orthodox teachings of a respected NATO intellectual and achieved rapid progress—to the brink of economic disaster.

By treating Ghanaian history as a monolith, it is possible to ignore entirely the reasons why Nkrumah at last tried to take a non-capitalist path. Instead, his increasingly bitter attacks on neo-colonialism can be discussed in psycho-pathological terms: "paranoia," "love-hate relationship," "increasing megalomania," "transference," etc. Finally, if all of Ghana's post-independence history was an experiment in socialism, and if that experiment failed, then it can be argued that socialism is really unworkable in Africa.

As we will try to show, the failure of the socialist experiment in Ghana did not lie in the peculiarity of African circumstances, and still less in the psychology of a single man. It failed because the attempt to break with Ghana's colonial past was not made

soon enough, and because when it was made, it was not complete enough. In order to understand the failure of the post-1961 socialist experiment, as well as the earlier failure of the Lewis strategy, it is necessary now to analyze more precisely the neo-colonial mode of production in Ghana and the barriers it presented to balanced, integrated economic growth. Three major sectors of the economy will be touched upon: cocoa, mining, and manufacturing.

Cocoa and Economic Control

Everyone knows how important cocoa is to the Ghanaian economy: from 1950 to 1962, it formed anywhere from 56 to 75 percent of Ghana's total exports. Many also know about the post-1960 fall in cocoa prices. And it has been widely suggested that this fall in cocoa prices was responsible for Ghana's economic difficulties. A few writers have even asserted that a conspiracy by London chocolate manufacturers was responsible for the drop in prices. The truth is both less simple and more intractable.

All cocoa manufacturers have an interest in keeping prices low—just as cocoa-producing nations have an interest in keeping them high. But neither group has been able to get a corner on the market. It is the interaction between world supply and world demand that actually determines the price of Ghanaian cocoa. The world supply of cocoa is increasing rapidly, but in recent years the world demand for cocoa has been relatively inelastic. That is, the more Ghanaian cocoa that hits the market, the less willing its foreign consumers are to buy it at the same price. Thus the world cocoa price drops as production increases.

Looking at Table 6, we see that after 1958, Ghana's cocoa income reached a kind of plateau, fluctuating within a narrow range. At the same time, production and exports expanded rapidly, with exports more than doubling between 1958 and 1962.

Assuming that demand remains relatively inelastic, as it has since 1957, some have suggested that Ghana ought to try to increase her share of the world cocoa market as against the other African producers. Actually, it is doubtful that Ghana will even be able to hold her own. Cocoa production is highest on virgin

Table 6
Prices and Volumes of Cocoa Exports, 1950-1962⁴

Year	World price £ per ton	World production in thousands of tons	Ghanaian exports in thousands of tons	Ghanaian cocoa earnings £ million
1950	208	752	267	54.6
1951	285	801	230	60.3
1952	301	642	212	52.5
1953	237	796	237	56.1
1954	467	774	214	84.6
1955	302	798	206	65.6
1956	221	840	234	51.1
1957	247	893	260	50.9
1958	352	767	197	62.3
1959	285	905	250	68.8
1960	226	1041	303	66.4
1961	180	1157	405	69.3
1962	170	1216	421	67.0

forest land, which in Ghana is in perilously short supply. The Ivory Coast and Nigeria, on the other hand, are said to have large amounts of suitable unexploited land. Ghana's competitive position is further undermined by the higher productivity elsewhere in Africa: Nigerian producers grow over twice as much cocoa per acre as their Ghanaian counterparts.⁵ Thus Ghana may have to make considerable efforts to cut costs, rationalize, and intensify production just to hold her own against the other cocoa-producing nations.

But what about withholding the cocoa or storing it? An attempt to construct refrigerated cocoa storage facilities was actually begun in 1965. But while storage may conceivably enable Ghana to take advantage of seasonal price fluctuations, a long-range program could only be successful if all cocoa producers participated. The history of such ventures leaves little room for optimism: in the past, attempts to withhold cocoa on an international basis have been defeated by one or more nations giving in to the lure of higher prices, and thus destroying the

4. Adapted from Tony Killick, "External Trade," in *A Study of Contemporary Ghana*, pp. 345, 348.

5. *West Africa*, December 14, 1963.

withholding scheme. Thus, in the long run, given the present political situation, cocoa storage would probably not change the price level appreciably. Consequently, neither increasing cocoa production nor decreasing it, neither storing cocoa nor burning it, can solve the dilemma of cocoa monoculture.

The problem of cocoa monoculture can be discussed superficially in terms of decisions about comparative advantage, marginal costs, sectoral stability, etc. The piecemeal social engineers of the World Bank and the Agency for International Development encourage this type of discussion. Yet the obvious alternative to monoculture is diversification.

Diversification, however, cannot come about as long as semi-feudal land relationships are maintained and as long as investment and savings decisions are uncoordinated. It can only be achieved through new social and economic structures: large-scale farming, central planning, and domestic production of agricultural capital goods. But the prerequisite for building these new structures must be made clear—a social revolution. Those socialists who try to conceal this prerequisite become increasingly hard to distinguish from the technocrats of the World Bank. The structures of the new Ghana cannot be adaptations or outgrowths of the old. This can be further seen from the way the mining industry has skewed the development of nearly every sector of the economy.

Mining and Infrastructure

Ghana has been famous for its gold mines for centuries. As early as 1471, there is a record of Portuguese traders dealing in gold near the mouth of the Pra River. But it was only in the late 19th and 20th centuries that European mining with modern technology was begun.

The long-run significance of the foreign-owned mines lay not only in the loss of Ghana's gold, manganese, and diamonds without adequate compensation.⁶ It was of equal importance that as a result of the mineowners' requirements, the internal

6. The "rent" paid during the early part of the twentieth century by foreign mine owners as a result of negotiations with Gold Coast chiefs, who were generally illiterate, was derisory.

Ghanaian economy was forced to adjust to an artificial infrastructure. As H. S. Frankel explains: "The history of . . . [foreign] investments in Africa and elsewhere affords many examples of railway lines, roads, ports, irrigation works, etc. in the 'wrong places' which not only failed to lead to income generating development, but actually inhibited more economic developments which might have otherwise taken place."⁷ All over Africa—and Asia and Latin America as well—wherever British mining industry and trading interests gained a foothold, the railroads became inland continuations of British steamship lines.

Another decisive effect of the British mining industry on the Ghanaian economy has been felt on the national wage structure. Superficially, it would seem improbable that the mining industry could exert any considerable influence. It contributes only a relatively small proportion of gross value added (5.3 percent in 1960) and employs only a relatively small percent of the total Ghanaian labor force (2.9 percent in 1960). Nevertheless, mine workers occupy a strategic position: 15 percent of all those employed in the private sector work in the mines. Mine workers also account for an especially large percentage of employed skilled workers. The gold mining industry alone employs 32 percent of skilled workers in both the private and public sectors.⁸

Further, while miners have been among the best organized strata of the Ghanaian working class—as early as 1948 the mine workers' union numbered over 15,000—they are divided into skilled and unskilled categories and geographically scattered according to their place of work. The mine owners, on the other hand, all have identical interests in wage policy and are able to concentrate their economic power to a much greater degree.

The catalyst which makes these factors influence the wage structure so decisively is a peculiarity of the market for gold. Goldmining, which is by far the largest of all Ghanaian mining activities, is especially vulnerable to rising labor costs, because

7. *Some Aspects of International Economic Development of Under-developed Countries*, Princeton, 1952, p. 14.

8. Tony Killick, "Mining," in *A Study of Contemporary Ghana*, p. 131; also Table 11.5, p. 264.

the price of gold on the world market is set at \$35.00 an ounce, the price at which the United States Treasury is obligated to buy. Practically speaking, the world price can go no higher and no lower than this unless there are sweeping changes in United States monetary policy.

Obviously, if wages rise beyond a certain level, profits will be squeezed to the point where mining operations must be curtailed. Consequently, the mineowners must lobby constantly to prevent the minimum wage—which is set by the government—from “getting out of hand.” Their success has been noteworthy: while the real wages of workers have not risen since 1938, Ashanti Gold Fields Ltd. consistently shows an annual profit of anywhere from 35 percent to 50 percent.⁹

The failure of real wages to show a significant rise since 1938 has had implications far beyond the mining industry. Low wages have prevented the growth of demand for consumer goods and thus retarded the development of manufacturing industry and contributed to maintaining Ghana's export orientation.

Merchant Capital and Manufacturing

The Ghanaian manufacturing sector is minuscule. In 1958, it accounted for only 1.8 percent of Gross Domestic Product.¹⁰ And since Ghanaian industrial statistics reflect the output of all kinds of independent artisans (92 percent of all “manufacturing” establishments had no paid employees at all), the modern manufacturing sector is even smaller. What modern manufacturing does exist is almost entirely foreign owned.

But what is really significant about foreign capital in Ghana is not its control of modern manufacturing. Even more important is the insignificance of the total investment. The foreign investor has made no serious attempt to exploit the possibilities of the Ghanaian consumer market, much less provide risk capital or sink money into capital-goods-producing industries. The foreign capitalist today is not inundating the oppressed nations with his capital: his investment, particularly in manufacturing, is trifling.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 141.

10. Robert Szereszewski, “Performance of the Economy, 1955-1962,” in *A Study of Contemporary Ghana*, p. 62.

In Ghana, the entrenchment of huge amounts of foreign merchant capital poses a formidable barrier to foreign manufacturing investment. Firms like UAC, which itself accumulates yearly net profits higher than the tax revenues of most African nations, effectively control the channels of exchange not only in Ghana, but in several other countries in East and West Africa. The basis of these firms' business is the import of manufactured goods from Great Britain. Any growth of consumer goods industries—whether established by Ghanaian socialists or by Ghanaian capitalists—would constitute a direct threat to their import lines.

Whenever manufacturing activity “threatens” to break out, the UAC attempts to contain it or take it over for itself. This speech by a CPP backbench businessman illustrates the process:

The government told us some time ago that the Industrial Development Corporation [a government agency] was going to establish a soap factory. All that the Corporation did was to buy somebody's soap factory at Korle Gonno for about £10,000. Now we learn that a certain engineer is coming to establish a £1 million soap factory for the UAC at Tema. Are we to allow foreigners to set up industries which we have the facilities to establish ourselves? Whenever we suggest that certain industries should be set up in the country, some expatriate [foreign] higher-ups [in the civil service] cleverly turn them down. They do so on the ground that the industries would not be economic simply because they want their friends overseas to come and establish them.¹¹

UAC “manufacturing” activity is confined to cheapening the cost of imported commodities through processing, assembling, or packaging them in Ghana.¹² This saves the UAC the cost of shipping certain commodities in bulk, but it does not begin the process of developing an integrated manufacturing sector in Ghana. Merchant capital remains one of the most formidable enemies of the socialist revolution because it is the most formidable enemy of the industrial revolution.

11. Gold Coast, Legislative Assembly, *Debates*, January 21, 1957.

12. The UAC's investment criteria are presented in the company's journal, *Statistical and Economic Review*, April, 1964.

The 1959 Plan

We have already noted that up to 1961, Ghana's economic policies followed the lines laid down in W. Arthur Lewis's 1953 *Report on Industrialization and the Gold Coast*. For two years after independence, the Lewis strategy of governmental passivity and reliance on foreign capital was so influential that Ghana actually had no economic development plan at all. The 1951 Development Plan (the Arden-Clarke Plan) which had concentrated on expanding Ghana's infrastructure, was completed; the country had entered a "period of consolidation." And when the second Five Year Development Plan was introduced in 1959, both its targets and its economic instrumentalities showed the influence of the Lewis strategy for economic development.

The Plan had been drawn up with a "shopping list" technique. Since the state had no control over the means of production, the question of how to generate the maximum surplus for development purposes could not even be raised. Instead, the various ministries simply suggested lists of whatever projects they thought might be both useful and economically feasible. The planners were then limited to dropping or modifying proposals in order to keep within the total budget: considering the interrelationships between projects in different sectors of the economy was not part of the planner's job.¹³ In this respect, the Second Development Plan resembled the colonial Gold Coast's earlier development plans.

Although the 1959 Plan also shared the "welfare state" orientation of the colonial plans, it appeared to be a considerably more ambitious effort. Over £350 million was allocated for a five year period, while the 1951 plan had spent only £117.5 million in six years. But this apparent break with the colonial past was wholly illusory.

Within the 1959 plan there were actually two separate plans. One, providing for expenditures of £132 million, was for implementation. The other, which was to remain on paper only, amounted to £250 million. The £132 million figure was called the "small coat" plan, while the £250 million paper

13. See E. N. Omaboe, "The Process of Planning," in *A Study of Contemporary Ghana*.

plan was referred to as the "big coat" plan. The small coat plan was private but operational; the big coat plan was public but only inspirational. E. N. Omaboe asserted that:

The small coat plan was based on a realistic appraisal of the country's resources and potential. The projects listed under this plan were those which could be implemented without much difficulty during the course of the following five years. The large coat plan on the other hand, contained in addition to the projects in the small coat plan, a number of projects which the planners themselves knew could not be carried through during the plan period for a number of reasons.¹⁴

The 1961 Crisis

In 1961, the Second Development Plan was publicly abandoned. Increasing balance of payments deficits, dwindling reserves, and failure to attract foreign investment forced Ghana to search for a new development strategy. Not "flirtation" with socialist planning, not hostility to British entrepreneurs operating in Ghana, but complete reliance on the conventional wisdom reflected in the Lewis approach had led Ghana into this predicament.

A series of increasing balance of payments deficits interrupted in only one year since 1956, culminated in a 1961 deficit of almost £53 million—approximately 12 percent of the national product. In order to appreciate the significance of such a deficit in an economy the size of Ghana's, we can compare this figure to the balance of payments deficits that preoccupy the United States government. The United States government institutes "voluntary" controls on private overseas investment and considers curtailing tourism by American private citizens, as a result of deficits of around \$2 billion—or less than half of one percent of the national product. What factors were involved in this terrible Ghanaian economic blood-letting?

The largest sources of outflow were greatly increased expenditures for non-durable consumer goods (chiefly food and clothing), rising costs of invisibles (chiefly shipping costs and

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 446-447.

freight insurance), and *disinvestment* by private capital. In addition, the foreign banks were steadily increasing their external assets. These were the main channels through which the leakage occurred.

What prevented the Ghanaian government from closing them off by instituting import and exchange controls? The answer is that imposing controls would have brought the government into direct conflict with the two largest blocs of capital in Ghana—the banks and “the firms.” To discommode them would reduce “business confidence” and discourage foreign investment. And, according to the Lewis prescription, Ghana could not industrialize without the foreign investor.

The Wasted Reserves

In the 1953 *Report*, Lewis had suggested that industrial investment of about £2 million yearly was necessary in order to achieve a “take-off.” In 1954, however, the Gold Coast government had well over 200 million pounds locked up in long-term, low-interest British securities. In order to meet the Lewis target, it would seem that foreign capital investment was totally unnecessary: all that was really needed was transfer of capital assets. The Government could have disinvested in Britain and begun to put the capital to work building factories at home. But such a course of action would have violated the guidelines established by the Lewis report. The 1954 *Economic Survey* explained why the Gold Coast had to continue holding its reserves in London as follows:

If the Gold Coast is to be able to stand on its own feet as an independent country, then it is essential that it should be able to demonstrate its ability and will to meet its commitments and so inspire the confidence without which foreign assistance whether in the form of private investment, managerial ability, or financial assistance, will not be forthcoming.¹⁵

According to this through-the-looking-glass logic, the way to obtain capital imports was to increase capital exports!

15. Gold Coast, 1954 *Economic Survey*, para. 43.

In the event, however, it turned out that Ghana's reserves could neither "inspire confidence" nor build Ghanaian factories. They had to be used to meet the balance of payments deficits. In other words, Ghana did not use up her reserves in an orgy of spending on so-called "prestige" projects: she used them to meet the obligations imposed on her by the "crackpot realism" of the Lewis strategy.

In Search of the Foreign Capitalist

The crowning irony of the whole pre-1961 period lay in the inability to attract foreign capital despite every conceivable inducement and concession. From 1957 to 1961 there was a net *outflow* of private capital amounting to about £6.5 million. Yet Ghana had followed Lewis's conventional recommendations to the letter. The constitution contained a pledge to compensate foreign capitalists in case of nationalization. The 1959 "Pioneer Industries and Companies Act" eliminated the maximum of five years' tax holiday and instead provided tax relief for as long as it took a company to recover its initial investment. And an Import Duties Act gave private companies remission of import duties on their raw materials.¹⁶

But despite fiscal and monetary policies which were conservative by any standards, generous guarantees to private investors, and special bureaus set up to attract foreign investment, the effort failed completely. It would appear that factors other than "business confidence" shape the investment decisions made by foreign capitalists. After all, if friendliness to foreign business could attract capital to the manufacturing sector, Liberia would be the Pittsburgh of Africa. The Lewis strategy for Ghana's industrialization failed because its main preoccupation—establishing the government's conservative credentials—was only ancillary to the foreign capitalists' investment criteria. The foreign capitalists most interested in Ghana were merchant capitalists who were primarily concerned to maintain the existing import-export pattern. They had no desire to see countries like Ghana outgrow their services.

16. "Promoting Private Investment in Less Developed Countries," in *Financing African Development*, ed. by Tom J. Farer. Cambridge, 1965, p. 134.

In the attempt to establish a conservative "image," Ghana had opened the way for the balance of payments difficulties of the 1959-1961 period and lost the greater share of her reserves without any tangible benefits. After 1961, the policies of the Nkrumah government changed: they included large government outlays for consumer- and capital-goods factories, Soviet-inspired planning techniques, stringent import controls, and expanded fiscal and monetary powers. All these policies were part of Ghana's natural reaction against the failures of the neo-colonial period.

7

POLITICIANS AND "LABOR ARISTOCRATS"

On September 4, 1961, a general strike broke out simultaneously in Sekondi-Takoradi and Kumasi. Quickly it spread to Accra: by September 6th, economic activity in Ghana's three largest cities had come to a halt. It was the first general strike since the Positive Action campaign of 1950. And while Nkrumah's attitude towards that strike had been ambiguous, his position towards the 1961 strike was clear as could be. During the early days of the strike, he had been attending the Conference of Nonaligned Nations in Belgrade. Apparently hoping local leaders would be able to handle the situation, Nkrumah traveled to the Soviet Union, where he began what was supposed to be a long vacation on the Black Sea. Finally, however, after two weeks of the strike, Nkrumah felt compelled to leave the Soviet Union and confront the workers himself. Threats, ultimatums, and administrative measures finally forced the workers back to their jobs.

Both CPP Ministers and Trades Union Congress officials denounced the strike as "counter-revolutionary." The government's duty, they said, was to assure the welfare of the country as a whole: it could not allow national economic planning to be sabotaged by the demands of workers, who already enjoyed a higher standard of living than the majority of the population. In 1950, however, the workers had also been better paid than agricultural laborers—yet they had been the vanguard of the CPP's Positive Action campaign. What had occurred to split the workers from the CPP? What had they contributed to the independence movement, and what had they gained from it?

One indication of their working conditions comes from Richard Wright's 1954 description of stevedores in Accra:

Coming toward me was an army of men, naked save for ragged strips of cloth about their hips, dripping wet, their black skins glistening in the pitiless sun, their heads holding pieces of freight—parts of machines, wooden crates, sacks of cement—some of which were so heavy that as many as four men had to put their heads under them to carry them forward. . . .

The wet and glistening black robots would beach their canoes filled with merchandise and, without pausing, heave out the freight and hoist it upon their heads: then, at breakneck speed, rush out of the sea, tamping through soft, wet sand toward a warehouse. They ran in single file, one behind the other, barely glancing at me as they pushed forward, their naked feet leaving prints in the soft sand which the next sea wave would wash away. On the horizon of the sea, about two miles away, were anchored the European freighters and between the shore and those ships were scores of black dots—canoes filled with rowing men—bobbing and dancing on the heaving water.¹

The goods Wright described could have been unloaded on the Sekondi-Takoradi docks. But this would have required shipment by rail to Accra—and a lowering of the importers' profits. And so men and canoes did the work of docks and cranes, for a wage of fourteen cents per trip. In one day, a man could make seven trips maximum—98 cents.²

In terms of real wages, 1954 (when Wright visited Ghana) was a relatively good year—one of the best since the peak year of 1939. As Table 7 shows, it was not until 1958, seven years after Nkrumah became Prime Minister, that real wages rose above prewar levels. Independence brought a temporary increase in real wages, but by 1963 they had again fallen below the 1939 level. While official figures for 1964 and 1965 real wages are not available, they have obviously deteriorated still further. Minimum wages remain at 6s./6d., and the most conservative estimates of price increases since 1963 put the figure at 20 percent.

Workers were forced to take jobs like those Wright described for such low wages because of widespread and continuous unemployment and severe disguised unemployment. The unemployment figures in Table 8 do not come from a slump year:

1. Wright, *Black Power*, pp. 120-121.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 121-122.

Table 7
Wages of Unskilled Workers in Accra, 1939-1963³
 (May 1939 = 100)

Date	Daily wage rate	Money-wage index	Cost-of-living index	Real-wage index
May 1939	1/6	100	100	100
Dec. 1941	1/10	122	151	81
Nov. 1943	1/10	122	168	73
Nov. 1945	1/10	122	186	66
Nov. 1946	2/1	139	198	70
Nov. 1947	2/9	183	212	86
Dec. 1948	2/9	183	227	81
Sept. 1949	3/2	211	243	87
Dec. 1950	3/3	217	285	76
Dec. 1951	3/3	217	333	65
Dec. 1952	4/6	300	326	92
Dec. 1953	4/6	300	324	93
Dec. 1954	4/6	300	324	93
Dec. 1955	4/6	300	344	87
April 1956	5/2	344	351	98
Dec. 1957	5/2	344	351	98
Dec. 1958	5/6	367	354	104
Dec. 1959	5/6	367	364	101
July 1960	6/6	433	364	119
Dec. 1961	6/6	433	410	106
Dec. 1962	6/6	433	426	102
Dec. 1963	6/6	433	486	89

in 1960, real wages and Gross Domestic Product per capita were both at record heights. It is necessary to emphasize these figures, for it is frequently denied that serious unemployment exists in Ghana.⁴ But as P. T. Bauer noted from personal experience:

Notices of "no vacancies" are ubiquitous. A constant stream of applications for employment reaches the mercantile firms, and this increases several times over when it becomes known that a definite vacancy has occurred or that an extension of activities can be expected. The inclination to trade even when only a few pence a day can be earned, the large internal migrations in both Nigeria

3. *A Study of Contemporary Ghana*, pp. 141, 155.

4. See, for example, W. A. Lewis, *Report on Industrialization in the Gold Coast*, 1953.

and the Gold Coast (which are only partly seasonal), . . . all these point in the same direction and suggest a widespread lack of opportunities for unskilled or poorly skilled peoples seeking employment at current wages.⁵

Bad working conditions, low wages, and high unemployment all undermine the theory that the Ghanaian worker is part of a labor aristocracy. So too does the history of the early trade union movement.

Table 8
Unemployment, 1960⁶

Age	Sex	Labor force	Wage- labor force	Unemployed	Unemployed as percentage of:	
					Labor force	Wage- labor force
All ages	M	1,682,730	567,760	109,560	6.5	19.3
	F	1,042,120	89,910	54,250	5.2	60.3
15-29	M	685,340	n.a.	82,670	12.2	—
	F	467,190	n.a.	43,330	9.3	—
30-49	M	709,770	n.a.	21,530	3.0	—
	F	404,480	n.a.	7,180	1.8	—
Over 50	M	287,620	n.a.	5,360	1.9	—
	F	170,450	n.a.	3,770	2.2	—

Unions and Politics

With the growth of an urban working class in the 1940's, the British took measures to prevent workers' organizations from expressing radical or nationalist aims. As Sidney Webb had explained when he was Labor Secretary of State for the Colonies:

There is a danger that without sympathetic supervision and guidance, organizations and labourers without experience of combination for any social or economic purposes may fall under the

5. *West African Trade*, p. 19. Bauer recalls that he asked the manager of a British-owned tobacco factory in Ibadan whether he could expand his labor force without raising wages if he wished to do so. The manager replied that his only problem would be to control the mob of applicants.

6. *A Study of Contemporary Ghana*, p. 149. The "wage-labor force" is defined as the number of employees (generally wage or salary earners) plus the number of unemployed. The "labor force" includes non-salaried (generally agricultural) workers.

domination of disaffected persons by whom their activities may be diverted to improper and mischievous ends.⁷

Thus, when unions were legalized in the Gold Coast in 1941, they were also required to submit their accounts, rules, and membership to colonial officials each year. British trade union bureaucrats were imported: they advised emulation of British organizational models and stressed the dangers of "political" involvement. The Gold Coast's first Trades Union Congress, headed by Sir Charles Tachie-Menson, C.B.E., was formed under their guidance.⁸

The British policy of de-politicization was unsuccessful. Richard Wright noted that every union meeting he attended was devoted to political questions: "Their standard of living could not be thought of as being separate from their colonial status and nobody could ever fool them on that fundamental point."⁹ The clear-headedness of trade unionists on this point enabled them to form the real vanguard of the independence movement; the CPP youngmen often followed reluctantly. In 1950, it had been the trade unions' declaration of a general strike which had finally pushed Nkrumah into opening the Positive Action campaign.¹⁰

Trade unionists played leading roles in the early CPP: H. P. Nyemitei held positions of both assistant general secretary of the CPP and president of the Meteorological Workers' Union. Anthony Woode, Pobee Biney, and Turkson Ocran also doubled as both trade union leaders and CPP spokesmen. Biney and Woode, both Marxists, were elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1951. Biney was an especially versatile trade union leader. He began as a locomotive driver and became vice-chairman of the Gold Coast Trade Union Congress. Then he became a rural organizer for the CPP. Biney established one of the first solid rural political bases for the party in the Denkyira area, and, in the parliamentary election in that district, de-

7. Walter Bowen, *Colonial Trade Unions*, London, p. 4.

8. Sir Tachie later became the first Ghanaian appointed to Barclays Bank's Ghana Board.

9. Wright, *Black Power*, p. 328.

10. See above, pp. 29-30.

feated the local "indirect rule" chief, Sir Tsibu Darku, O.B.E., by a margin of four to one.

After the 1950 Positive Action Campaign, however, with Biney, Woode, and other working-class leaders imprisoned, the Gold Coast government had pushed the Gold Coast Trade Union Congress (GCTUC) to reorganize. New leaders were appointed and affiliated the Congress to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the "free world" trade union organization. This was the apogee of the continual British effort to de-politicize the trade union movement. On the release of the militants from jail in 1951, however, they organized a rival Trade Union Congress, the Ghana Trade Union Congress (GTUC). This new group was pro-CPP, anti-ICFTU, and took a stronger position than the GCTUC on both wage and political matters.

But while the radical trade unionists helped to form a pro-CPP Trade Union Congress, they often took an independent line: GTUC leaders were especially critical of the "tactical action" period. Anthony Woode warned of the dangers involved in foreign capital controlling the Volta project. He and Ocran (then president and general secretary of the GTUC, respectively) attacked the party leaders in August 1952 for having compromised on the issue of immediate self-government.

This critical left-wing position was only tolerated for a short time. In 1953, the rival trade union organizations merged. Shortly thereafter, both Woode and Ocran were suspended from the CPP. One of the charges brought against Woode was attendance at a meeting of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), the international communist trade union organization. Ocran was removed from his post as general secretary of the Trade Union Congress and replaced by John Tetegah, a young clerk of moderate views. In 1954, the CPP refused to renominate Woode and Biney for their parliamentary seats. During the same period, with the militants purged, the Trade Union Congress moved towards a formal alliance with the "free world" trade unions: in 1954 membership in ICFTU was renewed.

The CPP Takes Over

Originally, the trade union movement had supported the

CPP voluntarily. Following independence, steps were taken to ensure that the unions would be unable to oppose it. After dumping the militant leaders, the trade unions were reorganized and integrated into the state apparatus. The major instrument of change was the 1958 Industrial Relations Act, the most visible effect of which was to create 24 big unions with large operating budgets and full-time staffs. Like most militant trade unions in underdeveloped countries, Ghanaian unions had been short on strike funds and relied on unpaid or poorly paid union leaders. Even the largest union, the Mines Employees, had started a hundred-day strike in 1955 with reserves of only £571.

The newly strengthened unions were subordinated to the Trades Union Congress (TUC). The TUC received 45 percent of the compulsory 2s per month union dues. Half of this sum, a quarter of the workers' dues, went for the TUC's "administrative expenses," i.e., headquarters buildings, officials' cars, and salaries. In addition, the administrative expenses of both local and national unions had to be met. As a result, only 15 percent of the dues went into social benefits, insurance, and strike funds. Furthermore, the TUC exercised disciplinary powers over member unions. Its Executive Board could investigate union activities, direct unions to discontinue any action, and suspend or expel disobedient officials.

The Trade Union Congress was, in turn, subordinated to the state and party. The Minister of Labor could arbitrarily dissolve any union—no rights of appeal existed. Similarly, the President of the Republic could freeze the funds of the TUC in response to any action which he thought "not conducive to the public good." Most important of all, strikes were, for all practical purposes, prohibited.¹¹

Substantial trade union resistance to this reorganization developed. The 1958 act was opposed by two of the oldest and best organized unions in the country: the United Africa Company Workers' Union and the Sekondi-Takoradi Railway Workers, the union in which Biney, Ocran, and Woode had been

11. For further details on the Industrial Relations Acts, see Tony Killick, "Labor: A General Survey," in *A Study of Contemporary Ghana*, pp. 142-147. See also Douglas Rimmer, "The New Industrial Relations in Ghana," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, January, 1961, pp. 206-226.

active. This resistance led the TUC to request a new law making unions outside the TUC illegal. The request was granted: the Industrial Relations Amendment Act of 1959 gave unions two months to amalgamate with the twenty-four approved unions or be dissolved by decree.

The leadership of the new unions served the interests of state and party rather than the interests of the rank and file. In 1961 indirect taxes on coffee, tea, and tobacco, as well as on such staples as cloth, vegetables, and fish, were raised 50 to 100 percent. Real wages dropped 15 percent. In July, the government imposed a five percent compulsory savings deduction on all wage-earners receiving over £150 per year. Though these measures bore especially heavily on workers, the trade union leadership made no protest.

The General Strike

On September 4, 1961, workers received the first pay packets from which the five percent compulsory savings had been deducted. The general strike broke out the same day. Transport workers in Accra and Kumasi participated, but the real heart of the strike was Sekondi-Takoradi. There, railwaymen, dock workers, commercial employees, civil servants, and market women joined to protest the wage deductions.

The first day of the strike, Krobo Edusei, Minister of Communications and Transport, addressed a meeting of railway workers, ordering them to return to their jobs and accept the compulsory wage deductions. From no other man in Ghana would a speech on austerity have been more inappropriate. Edusei, the owner of a £70,000 house in Kumasi, also gained notoriety as the importer of the first solid gold bed in Ghana. He once pointed out that "Socialism doesn't mean that if you've made a lot of money, you can't keep it."¹²

Trade Union Congress officials reflected Edusei's position: they ordered the strikers to return to work. It was, as one Accra labor official commented, "a demonstration where the workers are leading their leaders."¹³ On September 9, John Tettegah, the general secretary of the TUC, returned from Yugoslavia, where

12. Conor Cruse O'Brien, *London Observer*, March 17, 1966.

13. *Ashanti Pioneer*, September 6, 1961.

he had been attending the Belgrade Conference. Instead of supporting the trade unionists, he joined Krobo Edusei in calls for crushing the strike. A limited state of emergency was declared in Sekondi-Takoradi on September 9 and extended two days later. Then a dusk-to-dawn curfew was imposed. But the strike continued.

On September 17, Nkrumah returned from Sochi, repealed the emergency measures, and gave the strikers two days to return to work. On the 19th, the workers were still out. Nkrumah made a further appeal. This time he equated the strike with treason: "Those who do not [return to work] will have given clear indication that they and their instigators behind them are determined to bring about the overthrow of the constitution by illegal means."¹⁴ He also suggested that the workers present their grievances to their "spokesman"—the TUC.

The strike had been based on serious economic grievances: falling real wages, rising prices, and salary deductions imposed without consulting the workers. The CPP never even acknowledged these specific grievances. Nevertheless, on September 23rd, with their funds totally exhausted, the workers returned to their jobs. A few weeks later, the government began its clean-up campaign: the railway workers who had emerged as leaders were arrested; the market women who had organized provisioning of food supplies to the workers were detained; union officials who had supported the rank and file were expelled from their posts.

The CPP's Rationale

The CPP government rationalized its police measures against the organized working class by equating independence with socialism. According to John Tettegah, colonial trade unions are primarily concerned with improving the wages and working conditions of their members. Under colonial conditions this is acceptable, for any economic victories won by the union are simultaneously blows against the power of the foreigner.

But with independence, all this changes. Though the work-

14. *Ibid.*, September 22, 1961.

er is still employed by the same foreign-owned companies, he is now his own master and must devote his energies to increasing output. The "consumptionist" orientation of the trade unions becomes harmful, for wage demands on the foreign firms slow down the rate of economic growth. Thus, after independence the trade unions must take on new functions. Their role is not to agitate for higher wages: these will be determined by the government in the light of overall plans for development. Nor are they allowed to concern themselves with the content of economic planning, to aid in industrial management, or even to articulate workers' demands. Instead, they provide bone and sinew which supports the ideological "vanguard"—the CPP. Tettegah described the relationship as follows:

The first task of our revolutionary Trades Union Congress is to strengthen our Party continuously. Under the leadership of Osagyefo, the CPP is the vanguard of those who are grappling with the problems of today and tomorrow. In order to realise this, it is necessary that the aims of the Party are clearly explained to the workers so that they will see for themselves how they coincide with their own interests and they will consequently defend them against every kind of opposition.

Unless the workers are made familiar with the Party's goal, one cannot properly expect them to exert their fullest energies towards the realisation of these aims. Besides there is the danger that they may deviate to a course which would be harmful to their own interests.¹⁵

Paternalism is the keynote of the theory: it is the CPP which leads the workers, acquaints them with the party's plans, and protects them from themselves. The party's aim, according to Tettegah, was achieving economic independence. But economic independence was to be achieved by increased output, not by changing economic structures or property relations. Productivity, not revolution, was the key to development. Tettegah explained that "We will bring about our economic independence by the transformation of our entire national economy by raising the productivity of every worker at his place of work and in our entire national economy."¹⁶

15. John Tettegah, *Towards Nkrumahism*, Accra, 1962, p. 15.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

Increased productivity brought increased output; increased output brought increased profits to Ghana's foreign-owned business. But while CPP "austerity" legislation enjoined party officials to be content with no more than two automobiles and two mansions, ordinary laborers in Accra were told for nearly six years to be content with their daily rate of 6 shillings 6 pence—as food prices rose and unemployment increased. Essentially the CPP solved the problem of moral vs. material incentives by denying both: the workers were ordered to become Stakhanovites to defend a revolution that had never really begun.

PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE IN ONE COUNTRY

A country is socialist or capitalist not because of the ideas or intentions of its government, but because of the social structure which characterizes it, and the nature of the classes which play the decisive role in ruling it.

—Charles Bettelheim

We have tried to show how a combination of stagnating cocoa revenue and government permissiveness in dealing with British banks and import-export firms produced a severe balance of payments crisis which could only be resolved by drawing dangerously on Ghana's reserves. We have also discussed the erosion of the Convention People's Party's popular base within the organized working class. Now we must try to analyze the interrelation between these two pressures.

The task of defending the economy against the unregulated power of foreign business units operating in Ghana had to be undertaken or economic collapse would result. But constantly circumscribing any effort to reduce the powers of the British firms, banks, and mines was the CPP's lack of a popular base.

The structure of CPP support had been formed in the early and mid-1950's by appealing to local, sectional, and ethnic interests in the countryside, and by building patronage machines in the urban areas. The CPP ran main roads through pro-CPP towns instead of through neighboring anti-CPP towns, backed Brongs against Ashantis, and provided ambitious school teachers and petty clerks with well paid quasi-political jobs. But the tactics which won the elections of 1954 and 1956 were inapplicable when it came to the arduous and dangerous job of confronting British economic power and building a strong national economy.

Yet considerable economic growth would be required merely to maintain Ghana's relative "affluence," as population pressure

increased in the cities and as the new political and administrative elites became accustomed to their recently acquired consumption standards. Thus the new period required a break with the techniques of log-rolling, patronage wielding, and high-level negotiation. New methods of organization, mobilization, control, and communication were needed.

The six-year period of stewardship the Party leadership had served under the administration of Governor Arden-Clarke was a poor preparation for learning new political skills. The new situation required, above all, that the leadership make the demands of the most oppressed strata of the working class the moral imperative of the Party organization. The CPP, however, as the Ga Shifimo Kpee and the 1961 General Strike had shown, had grown steadily more and more isolated from Ghana's masses.

Although the CPP constantly referred to itself as a mass political party—one which supposedly first brought the techniques of Western political organization to Africa—this identification was quite misleading. The CPP was a mass party only in the sense that it had a large membership. It was not a mass party in the sense of mobilizing large numbers of people and bringing them into the political arena as active and politically conscious participants. Many of the men and women who bought membership cards in the CPP did so for the same reasons that citizens in the United States buy tickets to a policemen's ball. In both cases, the sale involves a tax levied on the vulnerable by the powerful. We have seen that membership in the CPP was required if the debtor-farmer was to be eligible for a loan from the CPP-administered Cocoa Purchasing Company. This principle was systematically extended to nearly every government agency. The "mass" membership that it generated could provide very little of the leadership and self-sacrifice required for the CPP to meet the challenges it now faced.

The CPP leadership, it must be said, recognized that a break with the past was required. It tried to develop new strategies and new approaches. Part of this awareness was reflected in the scrapping of the Second Development Plan and the substitution of a new Seven Year Plan which held out socialism as a goal. The CPP also formulated a new party program, which

was formally adopted in April 1962. Entitled the "Program of the Convention People's Party for Work and Happiness," it tried to define the Party's approach to socialism.

In trying to break with the past, however, the CPP showed how securely it was still bound by it. One of the critical tests of the solidity of mass support for any party is its ability to conduct open self-criticism. If it is not afraid of its constituents, it can afford to admit its mistakes, explain what errors produced untenable positions, and suggest how a new course can be taken. But if the party no longer has the confidence of the masses, it builds up a web of mystifications about its past and seeks to show that every new course of action is somehow related to, or the logical result of, an old victorious action. Thus the party has never made a mistake and, as long as it is guided by its present leaders, never will make a mistake. Even as the party abruptly changes its political direction by 180 degrees, the leaders announce, over their shoulders as it were, that the course of the party has never changed. And so we learn from the CPP program:

The Party has always had a consistent theory for enlarging the country's prosperity as the outline of our history included in this program will make clear. This theory has been tried out in practise during the difficult circumstances of the last ten years. The progress that has been made is indisputable proof of the practicability and correctness of the Party's line.¹

Since the party's line was both consistent and correct, and since it had led to success after success, it was clear that whatever problems still existed in the country must be the result of vestiges of the past. According to the CPP program, therefore, it was not the present-day property system or productive relations that constituted a barrier to change—the legitimacy of existing owners, managers, and leaders is never questioned—but the remaining influences of colonialism.

The Program for Work and Happiness states as one of its "pivotal" points that it is because of the "heritage of imperial-

1. "Program of the Convention People's Party for Work and Happiness," paragraph 6. The program is reprinted in David Apter, *Ghana in Transition*, New York, 1963, pp. 393-421.

ism and colonialism” that socialism must be adopted.² Socialism, for the CPP, is seen as a superior institutional means for coping with colonialism. It is not explicitly viewed as a vehicle for the betterment of a specific class, or as a system which offers a more rational or ethical way to organize society. It is forced on the leadership by outside circumstances and the need for rapid economic growth. As the Program for Work and Happiness states, socialism was adopted because the colonial heritage militated against choosing any other method of economic growth: “Owing to the absence of facilities for capital formation, it was clear from the very beginning that this prodigious task could only be accomplished successfully by the institution of socialism.”³

Here we have the key to the CPP concept of socialism: it is a set of techniques and institutions which enable rapid economic progress and economic independence in the face of a colonial heritage, rather than the mode of operation characteristic of a workers’ and peasants’ state. The whole theory and practice of CPP socialism flow from this basic distinction.

The Theory of CPP Socialism

Although one of the aims of the Program for Work and Happiness was the achievement of economic independence, the Ghanaian government thought that foreign investment could still play a positive role in the economy. In the Lewis era, foreign capital was to be the engine of industrialization; now the state was to be the engine, while foreign investors provided the fuel, i.e., the capital and foreign exchange.⁴ Foreign capital was assigned a major role in the Seven Year Plan: of the £1,000 million capital expenditure foreseen, no less than 40 percent was to come from foreign sources. But how did the CPP think it could protect the economy against the effects of such large-scale foreign enterprise? And why, in view of the failures of the Lewis period, did it think foreign capital would be attracted to Ghana—especially now that it had proclaimed socialism as its goal?

The CPP’s answer was to deny that there was any fun-

2. *Ibid.*, paragraph 7.

3. *Ibid.*, paragraph 33.

4. *Ibid.*, paragraphs 105-106.

damental conflict between foreign investment and economic independence. This denial was clearly expressed in Nkrumah's speech at the dedication of the Volta Dam, one month before the coup: "[The United States] is the leading capitalist power in the world today. Like Britain in the heyday of its imperial power, the United States is, and rightly so, adopting a conception of dual mandate in its relations with the developing world."⁵ "This dual mandate," Nkrumah said, "if properly applied, could enable the United States to increase its own prosperity and at the same time assist in increasing the prosperity of the developing countries."⁶ He pointed to the Volta Project as "living proof that nations and people can cooperate and coexist peacefully with mutual advantage to themselves despite differences of economic and political opinions."⁷ State enterprises and private enterprises, foreign capital and underdeveloped nations—all could work together to their common benefit.

The most ambitious attempt to explain how this peaceful coexistence between different social systems could contribute to socialism was made by J. H. Mensah, Chairman of the National Economic Planning Commission, in his presidential address to the Economic Society of Ghana. In a speech on "The Relevance of Marxian Economics to Development Planning in Ghana," Mensah argued that it was impossible to apply a theory dealing with European experience directly to the Ghanaian situation. Traditional Marxist theory, he said, is aimed "at the reorganization of the ownership of existing property."⁸ But in a developing country this is not a central issue, for "by and large, the means of production do not exist."⁹ The real problem to which socialists in developing areas should address themselves

5. Cited in *Africa Report*, April 1966, p. 22. "Dual mandate" was the theoretical rationalization for the policy of "indirect rule," a scheme which enabled British colonialists to rule large areas cheaply by co-opting indigenous chiefs as British agents. Credit for this theory belongs to Lord Lugard, acclaimed as the "conqueror" of Uganda and Northern Nigeria. After serving as military governor of the latter territory, he wrote the notorious *Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*, London, 1923. The book presents the last serious defense of slavery by a 20th-century author.

6. *Africa Report*, April 1966, p. 22.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *The Economic Bulletin of Ghana*, Vol. IX, No. 1, p. 4.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

"is not the rearrangement of the ownership of the means of production. The central concern must be with the building up of the nation's stock of productive assets."¹⁰

Because increasing the nation's capital stock is the primary problem, there is "a necessity for encouraging private investment, making tax concessions, and extending state guarantees to private investment as an integral part of the economic policy of a developing country despite its socialist ambitions."¹¹ Socialist ambitions, however, do have an important role to play: the rate of growth of the state sector must always exceed that of the private sector. But, Mensah warned, citing the *Guide to the Implementation of the Seven Year Plan*, "This should not be done by hindering the growth of the private sector, but by maximizing the growth of the public sector. Private enterprise will not be killed; it will be surpassed."¹²

Mensah also maintained that there are no classes and no class conflict in Ghana. Operationally speaking, there are really just citizens. And since class conflict does not exist, there is no need for a socialist party to mobilize poor peasants and landless laborers to transform the countryside. Instead, Mensah noted, "We are using the chiefs and other leaders of village society in laudable programmes of community development. Our political theory should not be based on the assumption that the chiefly class is an antagonistic class."¹³

Mensah, it must be stressed, did not hold views that were radically different from those of the rest of the CPP. Take, for instance, the description of socialism offered by Kofi Baako,

10. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 14. Léopold Senghor of Senegal has propounded almost the same theory. Compare, for example, the following statement: "And yet we have not legally suppressed private capitalism which is foreign to our country; we have not even nationalized anything. . . . Why? Because we began by analyzing our situation as an underdeveloped and colonized country. The essential task was to win back our national independence. Next we had to eliminate the flaws of colonial rule while preserving its positive contributions. . . . Where private capitalism comes into peaceful competition with socialism, the latter must, I feel sure, emerge triumphant. . . . In the meantime, we need capital, even from private sources." Cited in *West Africa*, May 12, 1962, p. 507.

13. Mensah, "The Relevance of Marxian Economics to Development Planning in Ghana," p. 15.

one of the founders of the CPP and a man who was often closer than anyone else to Nkrumah:

In an Nkrumahist-Socialist state, the farmer will not lose his farm; the landlord will not lose his house, but will not be allowed to exploit the tenant; the employer will not be allowed to exploit the worker, nor will the worker be allowed to cheat the employer by idling about; the car owner will still have his car. . . . [Nor will] the property or wealth which some one has acquired or earned through hard labour and through honest use of his mental and physical energies be taken away from him and shared among lazy, unscrupulous, indisciplined but able-bodied citizens.¹⁴

Neither landlords nor capitalists will be abolished—they will simply be regulated.

This is one of the remarkable things about the CPP: despite the wide differences in professed ideology between the Marxists like Mensah and the Nkrumahists like Baako, all seemed to mean the same thing when they talked about “socialism.” None of them thought that socialism required sweeping changes in the social relations of production. Was Krobo Edusei really so far from the mainstream of CPP thought when he defined “socialism” as a system in which “if you have a lot of money you can still keep it”?

The CPP theory of socialist development is not, as one might suppose, an idiosyncratic deviation or innovation in the history of socialist thought. The main elements of CPP strategy can also be found in the programs of numerous social democratic, socialist, and communist parties, not only in Africa but throughout the world. The doctrine of peaceful coexistence between private and state sectors in one country is especially popular. It not only forms the basis of political strategy in such oppressed countries as Léopold Senghor’s Senegal, but is advocated by Soviet “third world” specialists.¹⁵

It is not surprising, therefore, that many view the coup not as a product of the Nkrumah regime’s failures, but as a direct result of its successes. For them, Nkrumah’s Ghana has already become a socialist Atlantis which other oppressed coun-

14. *West Africa*, May 13, 1961, p. 505.

15. See especially the collection entitled *The Third World in Soviet Perspective*, ed. by R. Thornton, Princeton, 1964.

tries are urged to emulate. For example, we read in *Political Affairs*, the theoretical organ of the Communist Party of the United States, that:

This military coup is not the ordinary one. It is a desperate effort to reverse the path Ghana has chosen to secure its economic independence—the path of non-capitalist development; the path toward socialism. For the path of Ghana symbolized for all the new emerging nations how to break out from dead-end dependence on the imperialist ravagers of their natural wealth and resources.¹⁶

According to this view, “Ghana would have weathered the economic storm” she faced, and this was precisely why the coup was organized. “Time was running out for the imperialists to sabotage and retard the advance of the new system. They decided to strike.”¹⁷

Was the “advance of the new system,” along with its two million CPP supporters really stopped by a few hundred military “saboteurs”? Or was there something inherently wrong with the theory and practice of CPP socialism? This is the problem we must now examine.

CPP Socialism in Practice

CPP thinking about the transition to socialism is based on three assumptions. The first assumption is that state ownership of certain of the means of production necessarily leads to socialism. The second is that the state sector can overcome the private sector without engaging it in a life-and-death struggle. The third assumption is derived from the second but must be discussed separately: it is that foreign private capital will let itself be used to build socialism. What did CPP practice show about the validity of these assumptions?

(1) *State Ownership and Socialism*

The CPP's main interventions into the private sector of the economy were not in manufacturing, agriculture, or mining, but

16. “Ghana” (editorial), April 1966, pp. 1-2.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

rather in trade and marketing.¹⁸ The CPP was never able to achieve as much state ownership as the country described in the following passage:

The government owns and operates the railroads. There are a not inconsiderable number of industrial enterprises owned and operated by the government. . . . There are a number of mixed public-private enterprises. Public utilities, the radio, the telegraph, telephone, local transportation systems, municipal savings banks, etc., are publicly owned.¹⁹

The public budget in this country is 35 percent of the total national income, and the government is responsible for 25 percent of capital formation. Which country is it—Sweden? Finland? Burma? No, it is the West German Federal Republic. The example illustrates that it is not the size of the state sector that determines whether the society as a whole is capitalist or socialist, but the use to which the state sector is put. Does it exist primarily to serve the interests of private capital (as, for example, in the cases of Italian oil and British coal), or does it operate to serve the interests of the people as a whole?

In Ghana, there has been a state sector—railroads and utilities—for many years. It was established by the Guggisberg Ten Year Plan, which was drawn up in 1919. Twenty-four million pounds were spent in order to provide the Gold Coast with a modern, state-owned infrastructure.²⁰ The function of this state sector was, of course, to provide transportation and harbor facilities to assist the operations of the mineowners and the import-export firms. Merely by expanding this inheritance quantitatively, the CPP did not necessarily change its function. Since neither size nor growth in the state sector indicates whether or not a country is undergoing a transition toward socialism, we

18. CPP "nationalization" of several exhausted British gold mines was carried out because the owners had abandoned and threatened to flood them if compensation were not paid. The Nkrumah government paid off the British mine owners and worked the mines at a considerable loss because it needed the foreign exchange and could not find other work for the unskilled labor in the mines. See Tony Killick, "Mining," in *A Study of Contemporary Ghana*, pp. 257-262.

19. Alvin H. Hansen, *The American Economy*, New York, 1957, p. 14.

20. E. N. Omaboe, "The Process of Planning," in *A Study of Contemporary Ghana*, p. 440.

must further examine the relation between the state sector and the private sector, both in theory and in the actual Ghanaian context.

(2) *Peaceful Coexistence between Sectors*

The first major intervention into the trading sector since the disbandment of the corrupt Cocoa Purchasing Company was announced in December, 1961. The CPP began to regulate import licenses and to exercise quantitative control over imports. The Ghana National Trading Corporation (GNTC) was also set up, with 43 branches scattered throughout the country. The GNTC was later expanded by the £6-million purchase of the A.G. Leventis chain, and eventually received a monopoly of the import of "essential" goods.

These measures were desperately needed to gain control of the balance of payments situation. If the firms were allowed to continue to import freely, not only would deficits be threatened, but coordinated economic planning and collection of tax revenues would be impossible. As Tony Killick writes:

Ghana has been criticized for resorting to a regime of import restrictions and exchange controls. The truth may be that she delayed too long before imposing them. Thus the Seven Year Plan came into operation with . . . [the reserves] exhausted and it depended entirely for its success on an inflow of foreign capital on a scale completely without precedent in the recent history of the country.²¹

Simply from the standpoint of preserving national economic integrity, an agency with the functions of the GNTC was justified. As the chairman, E. N. Nortey, explained, "The idea is to end a situation in which 95 percent of our retail and wholesale trade is in foreign hands."²² Yet in 1961, Nortey felt compelled to minimize the extent of this CPP intervention in the trade sector. "We are competing," he said, "in a small way at first, on absolutely equal terms, with private firms." Nortey denied at the time that the CPP had any immediate plans to take over the means of distribution within the country, but

21. Tony Killick, "External Trade," in *ibid.*, p. 359.

22. This, and the following Nortey quotes, are cited in *West Africa*, March 17, 1962, p. 296.

acknowledged that it might happen "if the logic of the situation should take us there." "Our concern now," Nortey said, "is to build up our business and efficiency in order to compete freely without the benefit of any favoritism." Nortey explained that the GNTC would have to pay the same duties as other import agencies and would have to stay within the same import quotas. Similarly, the GNTC had to raise money from the commercial banks "in the same way as everyone else." The grants which it received from the government were for initial administrative expenses only.

But the GNTC, even though it eventually received "monopoly" powers, soon became the plaything of the private trading sector and a burden on the public. The Abraham Commission, formed in 1965 to investigate the activities of the GNTC, reflected in its report the fact that the GNTC actually intensified the role of the big import-export firms. Small retailers were driven out of business, while big retail interests were often able to bribe and extort rights and privileges with respect to practically any commodity. Goods destined for the Northern Territories were diverted to the Kumasi market; special commodities were allocated to favored traders; "corruption, prevarication, the diversion of stocks and the black market came to stay."²³

The Abraham Commission's recommendations for ending the situation, however, would have increased the big firms' power still more. It suggested curtailing the number of importers by cutting out small importers on the basis of "poor performance"; requiring bank certification of importers; and granting licenses only to those importers with wholesale or retail facilities.²⁴ All these measures would have hurt the remaining Ghanaian commercial entrepreneurs, without affecting the big firms in the least. A few weeks before the coup, the government did rescind the licenses of all importers who had no retail or wholesale facilities, i.e., small Ghanaian businessmen and suc-

23. The words are those of Frantz Fanon, written in 1961 and undoubtedly with the experience of Ghana in mind. *The Wretched of the Earth*, p. 145.

24. *Daily Graphic*, January 31, 1966. Both the firms and small Ghanaian importers were still allowed to import "nonessential" commodities.

cessful market women. It also ended the GNTC's monopoly over the import of essential commodities.²⁵

The collapse and scandal of the GNTC was not an anomaly: it was a mirror of nearly all Ghanaian attempts to enter the marketplace in competition with private business. Early agricultural experiments with state farming, carried out in the mid-50's on unoccupied land, proved a complete failure. An official report on these experiments, known as the Gonja Development scheme, evaluated it as follows: "The fundamental lesson is, without doubt, that the new ways cannot at present compete with traditional methods of agriculture as practiced in that region."²⁶ And the experiments of the 60's, according to the Abraham Report, were no more successful: the Ghanaian state farms had not, by 1966, produced enough foodstuffs to justify the amount of capital tied up in them.²⁷

Nor was CPP intervention into manufacturing any more successful. According to the Minister of Finance's 1965 budget statement, the government had invested £40 million in 32 state enterprises, whose total losses up to the end of 1963 amounted to over £15 million.²⁸

In studies of labor productivity, state-owned establishments tended to be well below the average. In electricity there was one privately owned establishment while the rest were public: the private concern had the highest productivity. There were four publicly owned printing concerns, all of which ranked low in terms of labor productivity, with an average half that of the private concerns. In logging and sawmilling there was one public enterprise: it had the lowest productivity recorded for the industry. In construction, there were 14 publicly owned concerns, 71 privately owned concerns, and two "unknowns." Almost all of the publicly owned concerns were well down in the bottom half

25. *Daily Graphic*, February 10, 1966.

26. Gold Coast Agricultural Development Corporation, *First Report and Accounts*, 1955-1956, Accra, 1957, p. 9. Cited in Tony Killick, "Agriculture and Forestry," in *A Study of Contemporary Ghana*, p. 232.

27. *Daily Graphic*, January 31, 1966.

28. *West Africa*, April 17, 1965, p. 419.

of the rankings, and they had an average productivity of about half that of private enterprises in the industry.²⁹

While the Abraham Report blamed the failures of state-run enterprise on corruption and lack of Ghanaian administrative ability, the real cause for the consistent failures lay not in the Ghanaian character but in CPP theory and practice. The CPP at first imagined that it could compete on an equal basis with the import-export firms; later, when it granted the GNTC a monopoly on import licenses, it thought that legal advantage was sufficient to guarantee the GNTC a competitive position. The assumption that private and state sectors can co-exist prevented the CPP from realizing the power the big firms could generate even against a legal "monopoly."

What is the appropriate method of bringing the capitalist sector under effective control? On the basis of his experience in Algeria and Ghana, Frantz Fanon wrote:

If the government wants to bring the country out of its stagnation and set it well on the road towards development and progress, it must first and foremost nationalize the middleman's trading sector. . . . Nationalizing the intermediary sector means organizing wholesale and retail cooperatives on a democratic basis; it also means decentralizing these cooperatives by getting the mass of the people interested in the ordering of public affairs.³⁰

The correctness of this view is borne out by the experience of the Chinese Revolution. When the state began to intervene in the capitalist sector to control the means of exchange and coordinate industrial planning, the private sector resisted by the same methods that were later used in Ghana—bribery of government workers, theft of government property, etc. A government counter-attack was launched: in 1952 the *san fan* movement was organized among government workers against the "three evils" of corruption, waste, and bureaucracy. It was followed by the *wu fan* movement against the "five evils": bribery of government workers, tax evasion, theft of government property, cheating on government contracts, and stealing economic in-

29. Tony Killick, "Labour: Industrial Productivity," in *A Study of Contemporary Ghana*, p. 170.

30. *The Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 144-145.

formation from government sources. According to Hsueh Mu-chiao: "The latter movement scored a victory as a result of the exposures made by the workers and other employees in the capitalist enterprises and the legal actions taken by the state. This struggle again shows that it would have been impossible to score successes in the economic struggle without relying on the strength of the masses and the proletarian dictatorship."³¹

But not even political mobilization is enough to protect the state sector. Full *economic* mobilization is also necessary. As the Soviet economist Preobrazhensky pointed out in 1926, the newly formed individual state enterprise is in a completely different position from the typical capitalist enterprise. It is much weaker. Therefore, it cannot be supposed that the socialist factory will outproduce the capitalist factory in competitive struggle in the same way that the capitalist factory conquered the crafts. This analogy, according to Preobrazhensky, is a "crude, superficial, uncritical analogy with the past."³²

Like Mensah, Preobrazhensky recognized that the means of production in his country were undeveloped. The USSR, he said, lacked "the material prerequisites needed for reconstructing [socialism's] technical bases."³³ But his response was very different from Mensah's. He argued that "for the state economy of the proletariat it would be utterly (and most stupidly) self-destructive to try to defeat capitalism in the arena of free competition at the present state of development of socialist economy. The latter would be disintegrated and eventually beaten in the struggle."³⁴ Instead, Preobrazhensky argued:

The state economy goes into action, and cannot but go into action, only as a unified whole. An individual state enterprise detached from the whole . . . would probably not survive but would be crushed. But the same enterprise forming part of the unified complex of state economy has behind it all the power of this complex, and for this reason, it is now not at all an isolated enterprise or trust of the old capitalist type.³⁵

31. *The Socialist Transformation of the Nationalist Economy in China*, Peking, 1960, p. 52.

32. *The New Economics*, Oxford, 1965, p. 127.

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Ibid.*, p. 128.

During the period in which individual state enterprises accumulate material resources, they will inevitably be weaker than private enterprises. Consequently, the superiority of a socialist enterprise only makes itself felt as a result of very large-scale cooperation and coordination.

The CPP lacked both the mass base and the economic control needed to establish the hegemony of the state sector. Lacking this strength, it nevertheless expected to compete according to the capitalist rules of the game. When a state-run industry exposed its inevitable weakness, however, this was a sign to the CPP that the enterprise should be abandoned as impractical. Unable to capitalize on the initiative of the organized working class, and increasingly disappointed by the "failures" of state enterprises, the CPP not surprisingly became more and more convinced of the correctness of its third major assumption—the ability of the state sector to attract and control foreign capital while building socialism.

(3) *Foreign Capital and CPP Socialism*

There is a seeming anomaly in the pattern of foreign investment in Ghana. During the Lewis era of laissez-faire and state inactivity in industrialization, foreign investment was unimpressive; in the post-1961 period, foreign capital poured in, comparatively speaking. If the foreign capital involved in the Volta Project is temporarily excluded from consideration, we find that, although long-term investment was negligible, short-term investment totals exceeded anything achieved during the Lewis period. According to the 1964 *Economic Survey*, Ghana had received £168 million worth of medium- and short-term credits. Practically the entire sum had been received since 1961. How had Ghana been able to draw so large a sum? What were the conditions under which the money came? And what specific advantages did it bring to the Ghanaian people?

If we break down the figure of £168 million somewhat further, we find that £157 million consisted of "suppliers' credits" with the bulk of repayments concentrated within four to six years.³⁶ The system of suppliers' credits is one in which

36. *West Africa*, October 9, 1965, p. 1123.

individual foreign firms undertake to complete a "development" project under an agreement guaranteed by the firm's government. The firm then advances the credit for the cost of the project to the African government, generally at terms above the prevailing bank rates, with the principal to be repaid within four to six years. The debt is in turn guaranteed by the African government. Consequently, one of the main points about these foreign "investors" is that they do not invest. They neither risk any of their own money nor wait for the project to pay before they take their profit.³⁷

This system proved to be highly beneficial to lagging industries in Great Britain and West Germany. To take one example, British shipbuilders were able to get a guarantee from the official British Export Guarantee Department for a £5 million submarine chaser for the Ghanaian government. Leaving aside the question of Ghana's vulnerability to submarine attack, this guarantee was reportedly given simply to boost British exports and help solve unemployment in British shipyards.

Another project financed by the suppliers' credit system involved a new road between Tema and Accra. Civil servants advised a modest project costing £1.9 million. However a £3.9 million contract for a full-scale motorway complete with telephones at regular intervals, was given to Parkinson Howard, the British contractors, and covered by the U.K. Export Guarantee Department.

Similarly, the West German government guaranteed a £9.5 million contract for a German firm to improve Accra's water and sewage system. Yet before the contract had been let, an expert study carried out by consultants appointed by the World Health Organization and the UN Special Fund had recommended a plan costing only £6.5 million.

The leader among all the firms providing suppliers' credits to Ghana is believed to be the Drevici group, also of West Germany. Ghana owes Drevici approximately £60 million in credits, all of which were guaranteed by the West German government. One of the projects carried out by Drevici was a

37. *West Africa*, March 26, 1966, p. 341. The examples following are also taken from this article.

giant tower topped by a revolving restaurant for the International Trade Fair in Accra.

As suppliers' credits increased, it soon became apparent that Ghana could not possibly finance the debt she had accumulated. Nevertheless, various Western countries, anxious to increase their export earnings, continued to cooperate with their firms, regardless of Ghana's ability to pay. As one observer noted in 1965: "Ghana has been sold a massive shipyard (how Ghana can provide credits to finance the sale of ships is a mystery) by a contractor from one of the several countries where the shipbuilding industry is notably 'depressed.' Perhaps this is one explanation for the contract?"³⁸

Even in 1964, the mounting debts owed to Ghana's "investors" abroad were beginning to disrupt the economy. Total revenue for that year was £120 million, and total government expenditure amounted to £144 million.³⁹ Of this sum, it was necessary to spend approximately £26 million for debt service payments.⁴⁰

In 1964, as it happens, the budget was more nearly balanced than in either of the two previous years. Beginning in 1960, with Ghana's reserves sinking, deficit financing had been required, and severe inflation followed. For example, between March, 1963 and December, 1964, the price of locally grown food rose by as much as 400 percent in some parts of Ghana. The average rise in food prices was 36 percent and the average rise in all prices was 17 percent.⁴¹ But inflation, instead of stimulating the economy, was accompanied by growing unemployment.⁴² This resulted in part from the kind of projects Ghana's Ministers had been persuaded to buy on suppliers' credits. They did not invest in projects that would be produc-

38. Douglas A. Scott, "External Debt-Management in a Developing Country," in *Financing African Development*, ed. by Tom J. Farer, Cambridge, 1965, p. 55. The country referred to is Great Britain and the contractor is Parkinson Howard.

39. *West Africa*, October 9, 1965.

40. Scott, "External Debt-Management in a Developing Country," p. 57.

41. *West Africa*, February 19, 1966.

42. Robert W. Norris, "On Inflation in Ghana," in *Financing African Development*, p. 104.

tive in a relatively short period: only 16 percent of the total spending involved industrial projects; agriculture accounted for only three percent, but infrastructural loans amounted to 72 percent.⁴³ Many of Ghana's investments would yield a return only after many years—if ever.

As Ghana's total external obligation soared—in 1964 it reached £349.2 million—confidence in her ability to pay decreased proportionately. In addition, import restrictions were imposed more tightly; the black market thrived; foreign exchange became the most valuable asset in the country; foreign-owned banks grumbled at requirements forcing them to hold government securities against their deposits; and there were growing complaints about the difficulty of getting payment from Ghana. Meanwhile, Ghana's Ministers continued to negotiate suppliers' credits—until the coup brought the process to a halt. As the *Wall Street Journal* noted the day after the coup, "Ghana is bankrupt, but you can't liquidate a country." Ghana was not liquidated after the coup: she was placed in receivership. And her Generals are now negotiating with the "creditors."

The Volta Project

Despite the mounting burden of suppliers' credits, many like to point to the Volta Project—the dam and aluminum smelter complex financed by the World Bank and the Kaiser Company—as proof that the CPP's faith in foreign capital was not totally misplaced. *Political Affairs* described it as the most important accomplishment of the Nkrumah period: through it, "Ghana became the first former colony in Africa to establish a power base of electrical energy for the all-sided development of the country."⁴⁴ Nkrumah himself, in his dedication speech referred to it as "a concrete symbol of the type of international cooperation which can, to quote my friend Edgar Kaiser, help to 'forge world peace.'"⁴⁵

Whatever the Volta Project may have meant in the international context, it certainly was a monument to the CPP's faith

43. *Ibid.*

44. "Ghana," April 1966, p. 3.

45. *Africa Report*, April 1966, p. 22.

in foreign capital. What exactly is it that the Volta Project is supposed to do for Ghana that calls forth such profuse praise?

Preliminary analysis indicates that many of the expectations raised by the dam will be disappointed. In 1961, when Eugene R. Black, then head of the World Bank, was negotiating the loan for the project, he noted:

In the long run, these projects may well be the foundation on which an industrial Africa rises. But now the major benefit to the new African nations is simply the rent or royalty or taxes that accrue to the government. I am the first to admit that, desirable as these projects are, they do not by and large provide great numbers of new jobs, particularly skilled jobs for Africans; they do not produce goods for the local market and thereby encourage the learning and spread of modern business practices; they have not succeeded in stimulating local African enterprises.⁴⁶

Since 1961, there has been no major change in the nature of the Volta Project that might cause a re-evaluation of this appraisal. The project, now completed, consists of a dam at Akosombo capable of generating 833,000 kilowatts. Behind the dam is a lake 250 miles long, providing possibilities for inland fishing.⁴⁷ The power from the dam runs a smelter—not an aluminum factory—at Tema. As we shall see, this is one of the most important aspects of the project. As Black indicated, the project does not require much labor: the preparatory commission estimated a maximum manpower requirement of 145 for the operation of the power project. This works out to £400,000 worth of capital per man.⁴⁸

According to Nkrumah's dedication speech, "The Kaiser Company's re-examination of the project enabled us to lower substantially the cost of the entire project."⁴⁹ The reason why Kaiser was able to cut costs below original estimates is because

46. Eugene R. Black, *Tales of Two Continents*, New York, 1961, p. 9.

47. Flooding the lake involved moving 78,285 people. Because farms have not been made available, the displaced persons have been quartered in camps and fed by the UN Food and Agricultural Organization. It has been estimated that it will take five years for many of the "settlers" to be provided with land. The "settlers" have been accused of developing a "refugee mentality." See *West Africa*, February 5, 1966.

48. Tony Killick, "Volta River Project," in *A Study of Contemporary Ghana*, p. 394. Our analysis is drawn largely from Killick's article.

49. *Africa Report*, April 1966, p. 21.

the project originally included an aluminum factory, not just a smelter. The British government, together with British aluminum companies, was going to enter into a contract to build an integrated aluminum industry, using hydroelectric power from a dam across the Volta at Ajena to refine Ghanaian bauxite. Projects to irrigate the Accra Plains and to develop a fishing industry were also included. This was before 1956, however; at that time dollars and aluminum were still scarce, and Britain wished to gain a certain independence from United States suppliers. But after 1956, neither aluminum nor dollars were so scarce, and the British lost interest in the project.⁵⁰

The project seemed to have fallen through when, in 1958, Nkrumah made contact with Edgar Kaiser who agreed to participate. Kaiser, however, was in a position to drive a very hard bargain, for no other aluminum company was interested. By any standards, Ghana got a much worse deal from Kaiser in 1958 than she would have received from the British in 1955. Among other things, the Kaiser project did not provide for irrigation or fishing, and the public utilities aspect of the project was separated from the aluminum industry. Most important of all, Ghana no longer got an integrated aluminum industry—only a smelter. The smelter *imports* alumina, mined in Jamaica and processed in the United States; while the development of Ghana's own mines is "deferred." Now Ghana will get only about half the revenue that an integrated industry would have brought.

But why should Kaiser ship alumina from abroad to Ghana, when bauxite deposits lie so close to the source of power? The answer is that the price of power which Kaiser has contracted to buy from Ghana is so low that transshipment is more profitable than utilizing local sources.⁵¹ Ghana, in fact, is furnishing power to Kaiser virtually at cost. Had the price been higher, Kaiser might have had to develop the local bauxite resources. The agreement however, runs for 30 years, so it will be a long time before Ghana gets an integrated aluminum industry.

Since Ghana is providing power to Kaiser at nearly cost,

50. Killick, "Volta River Project," p. 392.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 398. The price (2.625 mills per kwh) is said to be one of the lowest in the world.

the key to the project's financial success is ability to find other customers for the power. Use of the power has been offered to surrounding countries, but they are reluctant to give Ghana, or any foreign nation, control over their power. So far the only prospective foreign customer has been the United States Embassy in Togoland.⁵² Thus it is likely that Ghana will have to find the needed customers within her own territory. And ability to find customers depends, in the final analysis, on the rate of industrialization in Ghana.

Meanwhile, the maximum amount of power that Kaiser is obligated to buy is £2.5 million per year. Interest and principal, which begin to fall due in 1967, amount to £3 million per year. How will the government meet the remaining costs? One suggestion is irrigating the Accra Plains. But this would cost nearly £28 million—a sum Ghana is not likely to be able to raise in the near future. A plan to stock the lake with fish faces the same financial problem. Perhaps the new government will adopt Nkrumah's suggestion that the dam be turned into a tourist attraction like Niagara Falls. ("At night the fountain can be lit by thousands of multi-colored lights.") No matter what is decided, it is safe to say that, whatever the Volta Project did to "forge world peace," it has not guaranteed Ghana's economic future. Now Ghana has power—its factories remain to be built.

Mediation and Revolution

The setting in which Nkrumah stood, on January 22, 1966, to deliver his last important speech, accepting the American "dual mandate," was indeed appropriate. Before him lay a gigantic dam, built with foreign capital, blocking off a mighty African river. African resources and United States capital combined—to provide cheap power for Henry Kaiser's smelter, stoked with raw material mined in another neo-colony. The finished ingots would be shipped back to the land of the mandatory power to be sold for industrial purposes. The leaders of the mandatees would be given, as Eugene Black pointed out, "simply the rent or royalty or taxes."

52. See *West Africa*, January 29, 1966.

Thus it is that the doctrine of peaceful coexistence between sectors in one country leads back inexorably to the colonial mode of production. In the colonial era, the African chief granted mining rights or use of the land to the foreigner for a few pounds yearly; now, in the post-independence era, the African president grants use of the rivers for a somewhat larger sum. The whole process operates on a much more sophisticated level, but the essential relationship remains unchanged—as do the living standards of the people of the mandated country. The question to be answered is: where did the Ghanaian national independence movement begin to double back toward the past?

The first indication was the CPP's behavior during the Positive Action campaign in 1950. Arden-Clarke's announcement that the CPP could achieve power under certain narrowly prescribed conditions split the movement in two. At the Positive Action trial, the entire party leadership denounced the General Strike. The stage was set for the CPP to begin its parliamentary career.

The CPP was then, it should be remembered, less than a year old: it had not had the years of experience which teach a party which alliances can be accepted as tactical devices and which must be rejected on principle. Within the CPP, those who accepted Arden-Clarke's temptation—and his conditions—prevailed. In a sense, therefore, the CPP's first mistake was its last—for clearly a coalition with colonialism is fatal to any party which seeks to base itself on the strength and aspirations of the colonized.

As parliamentarians, the CPP members were forced to take over duties that had hitherto been exercised only by the colonialists. It was the nationalist party which now served on the Cocoa Marketing Board and sent the country's economic surplus back to Britain. It was the nationalist party that was forced to hold the line on wages in order to protect the mine owners' profit margins. It was the nationalist party which came to believe that its "anchor of safety" was the British pound.

During the pre-independence period, the CPP naturally developed group interests which were neither those of the colonialists nor yet those of the colonized; and the granting of independence failed to reduce the fundamental divergence of in-

terests. Ideologies appeared which sought to mask the conflict: they asserted that foreign capital and African socialism could coexist, while the party and masses worked to overcome the colonial heritage. But ultimately the CPP could not overcome the contradictions generated by its position as mediator between the former colonialists and the erstwhile colonized.

In any country, the political elite can derive its income only from tapping the economic surplus. But in an oppressed country like Ghana, there is no inherent tendency for self-sustaining economic growth. How, then, is the elite to derive its sustenance without starving its subjects? In the food-farming sector, a subsistence economy prevails; cash crops like cocoa have been subject to deteriorating terms of trade; mining is dominated by foreign firms with varying profit margins. Taxing the foreign-owned intermediary sectors—the banks and import-export firms—is as politically hazardous as trying to tax the mines. This leaves only one sector—manufacturing. In order to increase, or even maintain, its standard of living and its political machine, the political elite *must* increase manufacturing.

But, as we have seen, this cannot be accomplished without the complete mobilization of the organized working class, the same working class that the political elite was forced to discipline in the pre-independence days to placate the colonial interests. And in the post-independence period, the political elite and the organized working class confront each other as potential consumers of the economic surplus. To combat the growing dissatisfaction of the working class and the urban lumpen-proletariat—which in Ghana was expressed both by the Ga Shifimo Kpee and the 1961 General Strike—the political elite is forced to turn more and more to mystification as a source of legitimacy. The cult of the leader is born—not from the nationalist hero's desire for flattery, but because, as Fanon points out, "the leader is all the more necessary now that there is no more party." But even this does not solve the economic problem.

Consequently, the political elite must turn more and more to foreign interests: taxes on the mines, the banks, the firms, small as they may be, provide the only solid source of revenue; suppliers' credits, onerous as the terms may be, remain the only hope for increasing the economic surplus as the population

expands and the terms of trade decline. Eventually, however, the foreign investor demands his money back.

By the time the coup occurred, the CPP's relation to the masses had passed through three stages, similar to those experienced by political elites in oppressed countries elsewhere. During the first stage, the CPP derived its legitimacy from its ability to strike bargains with the colonial leaders. During the second stage, it derived legitimacy from its past successes in bargaining with the colonialists. During the final stage, the masses and the other competing elites—the army and the civil servants—began to realize that the bargains struck by the political elite were worthless to them. From this point on, it was only a matter of time before a new elite emerged which would resolve the contradiction either in favor of the masses or in favor of neo-colonialism. The effort to coordinate the interests of both had proved impossible.

The era of postwar colonial independence movements is over now. The political elites who mediated their way to power are giving way to new military/bureaucratic elites who function in the name of austerity and efficiency. But it must not be thought that, simply by acting in favor of the old colonial power, the new rulers have put an end to the contradictions which faced and defeated the departing political elites.

How can this "circulation of elites" be stopped? What is needed to put an end to the politics of mediation? How can political and economic independence be combined? The specific answers to these questions can only come from Africans, through the experience of their own revolutionary movements. Already, however, in "Portuguese" Guinea, where the *Partido Africano da Independencia da Guiné é Cabo Verde* (PAIGC) has liberated over half the country, a general outline of the solution appears to be developing. In "Portuguese" Guinea, starting with a movement very similar in class composition to that in Ghana during the early days of the CPP, the PAIGC has been able to develop a revolutionary movement through the process of anti-colonial war.

In the oppressed countries of the world, this process serves as the functional equivalent of the 19th-century industrial war between proletarians and capitalists. Not violence in itself, but

the experience of serving in the militia and in the guerrilla army prepares the peasants and the urban workers for the post-liberation struggles of industrialization and national reconstruction. Peasants, proletarians, and revolutionary intellectuals develop into a homogeneous, disciplined force, learning at the same time the technical skills and the inventiveness needed for industrialization. The guerrilla army and the people's war reproduce the conditions of the proletarian army in countries where virtually no industry exists.

If, as the evidence of recent history suggests, this is the road forward for the exploited colonial and neo-colonial peoples of the world, then it will be in the forests and savannahs, where the roads turn into paths and the sun beats down on thatched-roofed shacks, that Ghana's working classes will join together to prepare the future.

(continued from inside front cover)

Sadder, because so tragically premature, was the death on May 25 of Cora Kaye Wilson at the age of 33 after an illness of only a few weeks. Wife of H. H. Wilson, Professor of Politics at Princeton who has often written for MR, Cora was as brilliant as she was beautiful and vivacious—a truly happy spirit, exuding joy of life and love of people. She put her keen intelligence and analytical powers at the service of a positive approach to life, never losing confidence that men could, through struggle and the use of reason, create a decent world to live in. She had completed her graduate work for a Ph.D. in American Studies at NYU and was working on her dissertation. Already, in several teaching assignments, she had given promise of an outstanding career as teacher and scholar. Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to her husband and family.

We acknowledge with gratitude the contribution given in memory of the late Joseph Salmon of Buffalo, by a group of his friends. They write that he was a staunch supporter of MR and a conscientious history teacher who fell victim to the McCarthy onslaught.

As many MR readers know, the Second Socialist Scholars Conference will be held in New York (at the Hotel Commodore) on September 9-11. Ten topics have been selected for panel discussion, and many leading social thinkers from the United States and abroad have accepted invitations to participate. Here is a partial list: "On Socialist Man," Isaac Deutscher, Herbert Marcuse; "Contemporary Revolutionary Movements," Franz Schurman, Gordon Lewis, James Petras; "'Libermanism' and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and the USSR," Alexander Erlich, Lynn Turgeon, Victor Perlo, Harry Braverman, Alan Solganick; "Realism and Literature," Lee Baxandall, Norman Rudich; "Poverty and Powerlessness," Richard Cloward, Sherman Barr, Oscar Lewis, Sigmund Diamond; "Baran and Sweezy, *Monopoly Capital*," John Owen, Karl Niebyl, Russ Nixon, Paul Sweezy; "American Corporate Liberalism," Gabriel Kolko, James Weinstein, Philip Foner, Robert Engler, Ronald Radosh, Martin Sklar; "Contemporary Imperialism," Harry Magdoff, Brijen Gupta; "Legacy of Negro Slavery," Eugene Genovese, C. Vann Woodward, Herbert Aptheker; "Comintern, Fascism, and the United Front," Robert Colodny, John Cammett, Leslie Derfler, Helmut Gruber. The honored dinner speaker will be Conor Cruise O'Brien. As you can see this is a rich intellectual menu with something for everyone's taste. We hope there will be a bigger turnout than last year's, which was over 1,000. For further information and applications, write to the Socialist Scholars Conference, Box 462, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201.

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